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PROOF-TEXTS

OF

ENDLESS PUNISHMENT,

EXAMINED AND EXPLAINED.

BY

D. P. LIVERMORE.

STEREOTYPED EDITION.

CHICAGO, ILL.:
D. P. LIVERMORE, 132 CLARK STREET.
1864.

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PREFACE.

THE object of this work is to assist the reader to a correct understanding of those controverted passages, which are supposed to teach the doctrine of endless punishment. We have given the Bible a thorough examination, and are convinced that this doctrine finds no support in the sacred pages. It is of human origin.

The best Heathen writers admit that this doctrine was *invented* to frighten those who could not be restrained from vice by the punishments of this life! It was regarded by the Heathen, as it now is by some professing Christians, as the most efficient motive to deter men from sin.

Cicero, in his seventh oration, page 207, says that "It was on this account that the ancients INVENTED those *infernal punishments* of the dead, to keep the wicked under some awe in this life, who without them, would have no dread of death itself."

Polybius, who was a celebrated Greek historian, speaking upon this subject says: "Since the multitude is ever fickle and capricious, full of lawless

passions, and irrational and violent resentments, there is no way left to keep them in order, but by the *terrors of future punishment*, and all the pompous circumstances that attend such kind of FICTION! On which account the ancients acted, in my opinion, with great judgment and penetration, when they *contrived* to bring those notions of the gods and a future state, into the popular belief."

Strabo, who was a Greek geographer and eminent philosopher, says: "It is impossible to govern women and the gross body of the people, and to keep them pious, holy and virtuous, by the precepts of philosophy. This can only be done by the *fear of the gods*, which is raised and supported by ancient fictions and modern prodigies." And again, he says, that "The apparatus of the ancient mythologies was an engine which the legislators employed as bugbears to strike a terror into the childish imagination of the multitude."

Seneca says: "Those things which make the infernal regions terrible, the darkness, the prison, the river of flaming fire, the judgment seat, etc., *are all a fable*, with which the poets amuse themselves, and by them agitate us with vain terrors!"

It is here admitted that the doctrine of endless punishment was an "invention" of the heathen, a "fiction" and a "bugbear," contrived to deter those people from sin, who could not be influenced by the rewards and punishments of this life.

The doctrine of endless punishment, then, being of purely Heathen origin, has no claims upon our

regard, any more than idolatry, and the belief of the ancient Jews in the transmigration of souls! It forms no part of divine revelation, and we reject it, because it is a pure fiction of the imagination.

We have not been able to introduce every passage which has been urged in support of the doctrine of endless punishment, but we have examined and explained all the prominent texts, which are relied upon, to prove the doctrine in question, and have shown that they yield no support to this dogma of the church.

In giving our thoughts upon these controverted texts, we have not written so much for the eye of the critic, as to defend the truth. Conscious of its imperfections, we send out this work, with an earnest desire that it may bear some humble part in removing the religious errors of the world, and in bringing many souls to the knowledge of the truth.

NEW EDITION.

THE first edition of this work having been exhausted, and the demand for it still continuing, we now present a new, revised and much enlarged edition, embracing a wider range of topics than what we first proposed to discuss, but which have an important bearing upon the great question at issue between Universalists and theologians of the Sacrificial Church. We have written this work with an humble desire to aid the reader in understanding the Sacred Scriptures. We send it forth, hoping that it may be an instrumentality of good, by leading many into a critical investigation of these "Proof-Texts" of endless punishment, and in correcting the erroneous interpretations that have obtained in the Christian world.

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EATETH DAMNATION TO HIMSELF, ... 365
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HIDDEN TO THE LOST, ... 37
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AGREE WITH THINE ADVERSARY, ... 37
Agree with thy adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.—MATTHEW v. 25, 26.

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FURNACE OF FIRE, ... 37
And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.—MATTHEW xiii. 42.

GOING BEFORE TO JUDGMENT, ... 37
Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment: and some men they follow after.—1 TIMOTHY v. 24.

SIN UNTO DEATH, ... 38
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DRAW BACK TO PERDITION, ... 38
But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.—HEBREWS x. 39.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT.

.nd these shall go away into everlasting punishment; he righteous into life eternal."—MATTHEW XXV. 46.

ERHAPS no passage of scripture between the of the Bible is brought forward more frequent- ıd confidently to support the doctrine of end- punishment, than the text we now propose to aine and explain. This doctrine is assumed to ue, and then the passage before us is adduced ove it! Thousands are religiously educated to ve that *everlasting* means *endless*—their early uction and all their sectarian prejudices are in r of such a definition of the word, and hence, n they read of "everlasting punishment," they erstand the expression to mean "*endless* pun- ıent." Such are, therefore, surprised to learn *aionion*, here translated *everlasting*, does not ssarily have that signification; that it is *not* same word in the original which is rendered *ess;* that it is often used in the Scriptures in a ted sense, and that its proper signification is *'asting*.

efore coming to a direct exposition of the text re us, we ask the attention of the reader to two

or three important considerations which have a legitimate bearing upon our subject.

First, the different classes of individuals referred to in the text, are acquitted and condemned on account of their works, and, therefore, the subject cannot refer to the immortal world, for heaven is not to be attained by good works. Eternal life is the pure, free and unpurchased gift of God, and is not of works of righteousness that we have done, lest any man should boast!

The second important consideration to which we invite the reader's attention is, that the original word *kolasin*, supposed to teach the doctrine of endless punishment, was frequently applied, as lexicographers inform us, to the *pruning of trees*. In this sense, its application here is full of significance. It shows at once the important object of punishment, viz.: to improve and benefit man. For what purpose are trees pruned? Not to injure them, certainly, but to improve them. Such being clearly the object of punishment, under the government of an all-wise and benevolent God, hence this term *kolasin* was appropriately employed in the text.

Lexicographers define *kolasin* thus: "Punishment, chastisement, correction, the pruning of trees." This "everlasting punishment" (*aionion kolasin*) is designed for some wise and benevolent purpose, not absolutely to injure, but ultimately to benefit and improve those chastened.

Again: The word rendered everlasting (*aionion*)

is not the same word as is translated *endless*, and, therefore, the doctrine of endless punishment is not taught in the passage under consideration. The word *endless*, from *akatalutos*, occurs but once in the Bible — Hebrews vii. 16: "After the power of an endless life."

Undoubtedly, if the doctrine of endless punishment were taught in the passage under consideration, a different term would have been chosen than *aionion*, which signifies an *indefinite period of time*. And this remark is equally applicable to the life of the righteous, which is here called eternal (*aionion*) and not endless — not *akatalutos*. This shows conclusively, we think, that had the Savior referred to the life-immortal in heaven, which all admit is endless, he would have employed a descriptive term which clearly taught it, and not one of doubtful import.

Another important fact is, that when the Scripture writers set forth the future state of happiness, they employ other terms than *aionion*, rendered in the text everlasting and eternal. Different terms we find employed for this purpose, which are never connected with punishment. *Aphthartos* is a Greek word, which occurs several times in the New Testament, and means incorruptible, immortal, but is never applied to punishment. We read of "the glory of the *uncorruptible* God," Rom. i. 23; and that "the dead shall be raised *incorruptible*," 1 Cor. xv. 52; and of "an *inheritance incorruptible*," 1 Peter i. 4; and of the "King *eternal*

and *immortal*," 1 Tim. i. 17; but we never rea
incorruptible punishment, nor of an *immortal* l

Aphtharsia is another Greek word which
employed by the sacred writers in a similar se
to signify *immortal* and *incorruption*. Hence
read that the "dead are raised in *incorrupti*
1 Cor. xv. 42; and "inherit *incorruption*," v
50; and "that Christ hath brought life and *im*
tality to light." 2 Tim. i. 10. This term, all ad
is never applied to punishment. It describes
endless life, but not an endless death. And
we are sometimes told that if *aionion*, rend
eternal and everlasting in the text, does not r
to the future state, there are no terms employe
the Scriptures to describe the future, immortal
dition of mankind. There never was a gre
mistake, as these remarks show. We have alre
seen that *akatalutos*, translated *endless*, occurs
in the Bible—Hebrews vii. 16, and is applie
life—"After the power of an endless life."
this word is never applied to death, to punishm
or misery.

Athanasia is another term employed to sig
immortality, and occurs three times, as follo
1 Cor. xv. 53, 54, and 1 Tim. vi. 16. In
place, it is rendered "immortality," but is n
applied to punishment or suffering.

We now ask the reader's attention to the de
tion given by several lexicographers, to *aion*, fi
which the adjective *aionion* is derived, here
dered everlasting:

DONNEGAN'S DEFINITION. — "*Aion*, time; a space of time; life-time and life; the ordinary period of a man's life; the age of man; man's estate; a long period of time; eternity; the spinal marrow; (*eis ton aionia*,) to a very long period, to eternity; (*apo aionos*,) from, or in the memory of man. *Aionios*, of long duration, eternal, lasting, permanent."

PICKERING'S DEFINITION. — "*Aion*, an age; a long period of time; indefinite duration; time, whether longer or shorter, past, present, or future; in the New Testament, the wicked men of the age; the life of man. *Aionios*, of long duration, lasting, sometimes everlasting; sometimes lasting through life, as *æternus*, in Latin."

SCHREVELIUS' DEFINITION. — English Edition. — "*Aion*, an age, a long period of time; indefinite duration; time, whether longer or shorter, past, present, or future; also, in the feminine gender, life, the life of man. *Aionios*, of long duration, lasting, sometimes everlasting; sometimes lasting through life, as *æternus*, in Latin."

HINK'S DEFINITION. — "*Aion*, a period of time; an after-time, eternity. Comp. Latin, *ævum*. *Aionios*, lasting, eternal, of old, since the beginning."

WRIGHT'S DEFINITION. — "*Aion*, time, age, life-time, period, revolution of ages, dispensation of Providence, present world or life, world to come, eternity. *Aionios*, eternal, ancient."

GILES' DEFINITION. — "*Aion*, time, an age, an indefinite period of time, eternity, the spinal marrow. *Aionios*, eternal, ancient."

With such a variety of signification as this word has, all can see that the doctrine of endless punish-

ment can derive no support simply because *aionion* is applied to it, for the first definition given of *aion* by Donnegan, one of the best lexicographers, is, "time, a space of time; life-time and life; the ordinary period of man's life." This certainly falls far short of proving endless punishment! And Pickering's definition of *aionios* is "of long duration, lasting, sometimes lasting through life." This surely does not prove endless misery! The true meaning of *aionion* is *age-lasting*, or an indefinite period of time. It is applied to things that are endless, but more frequently to things of limited duration. It is the subject to which it is applied that indicates its meaning. If the nature of that subject is endless in duration, that qualifies the meaning of the word, and indicates the sense in which we use the term, everlasting. But if the subject to which this term is applied, is of a limited nature, the word has a limited signification. The subject always determines the meaning of the word. We read of the everlasting hills, and the everlasting God, and it is the nature of each subject which determines the meaning of the word. It must, therefore, first be shown that punishment is necessarily endless in duration, before we can determine that the word *everlasting*, when applied to it, has any such signification. We have already seen that *kolasis*, here rendered *punishment*, is correction and improvement, and, therefore, cannot be endless. Everlasting, therefore, when applied to punishment, cannot have that signification. As

the word *aion*, from which *aionios* is derived, did not originally signify *eternity*, or *endless duration*, the Scripture writers would repeat the word to express great duration, and sometimes add the adverb *eti*, which means *yet*, *still* or *farther* and *beyond*. "The Lord shall reign (*ton aiona kai ep aiona kai eti*) forever and ever, and farther." Ex. xv. 18; or as Dr. Adam Clarke has it, "forever and MORE!" Again: "They shall shine as the stars (*eis ton aiona kai eti*) forever and ever and FARTHER." Dan. xii. 3. Again, Micah iv. 5: "We will walk in the name of the Lord our God (*eis ton aiona kai epekeina*) forever and BEYOND IT." It would be folly to say that *aion* here means eternity or endless duration, as there could be nothing farther or beyond it! These considerations will aid us essentially in understanding the subject before us.

We pass now to give what we regard as the correct interpretation of the text and context. The passage before us is the closing part of the parable of the sheep and goats, which is found in connection with a series of illustrations, which composed one unbroken discourse, recorded in the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew.

All that was recorded in the parable was to be be fulfilled, as the 31st verse of the context informs us: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." The language is highly figurative, and cannot, therefore, bear, as many have erroneously supposed, a literal inter-

pretation. In the sense in which this language was originally employed, the Scriptures clearly show that the coming of Christ in his kingdom and glory, took place in the days of the primitive Christians, and that some who listened to his instructions lived to witness his coming, in the spiritual manifestation of his truth.

For proof upon this point, we refer the reader to the 27th and 28th verses of the 16th chapter of Matthew, which read as follows:

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

The coming of Christ here spoken of, we think, is the same as is referred to in the 31st verse of the context. In both cases his coming is spoken of as a glorious event; he is represented as being attended with angels, and coming to reward men according to their works. He indicated the nearness of the event by saying: "There be some standing here, who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

Similar phraseology is found at the 1st verse of the 9th chapter of Mark:

"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."

According to the declaration of the great Teacher, some who listened to his instructions should live to see the kingdom of God come with power, or the Son of man coming in his kingdom. Language similar to this may be found in Luke ix. 27:

"But I tell you of a truth, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God."

Jesus, in imparting instruction to his disciples, in regard to the same event, employed the following language:

"But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." Matt. x. 23.

Here is a positive assertion from the lips of the Savior, that the disciples should not go over the cities of Israel, before the coming of the Son of man should take place.

These scriptures have an important bearing upon the subject before us, as they show when the Son of man came in his kingdom and in his glory. This point established, we know when the events spoken of in the parable of the sheep and the goats took place. He came during the life-time of some who heard him speak. Not that he came personally, for he never claimed that he would come thus; but he would come in his kingdom and glory, and in the glory of his Father; he would come by the manifestation of his grace and truth.

Archbishop Newcome says:

"The coming of Christ to destroy the Jews, was a *virtual* and not a *real* one, and was to be understood figuratively and not literally."

Again he says:

"The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus is emphatically the coming of Christ. The spirit of prophecy speaks particularly of this, because the city and temple were then destroyed, and the civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews subverted. The Jews also suffered very great calamities under Adrian; but not so great as those under Vespasian; and the desolation under Adrian is not so particularly foretold. But I think that any signal interposition in behalf of his church, or in the destruction of his enemies, may be metaphorically called a coming of Christ."

Dr. Campbell remarks on the expression, "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:"

"We have no reason to think that a particular phenomenon in the sky is here suggested. The striking evidences which would be given of the divine presence, and avenging justice, are a justification of the terms."

Kenrick observes:

"The great power and glory of Christ were as conspicuously displayed at the destruction of Jerusalem, and other circumstances which accompanied that event, as if they had seen him coming upon the clouds of heaven, to punish his enemies. When the prophet Isaiah represents God as about to punish the Egyptians, he speaks of him as riding

upon a swift cloud for that purpose. (Isa. xix. 1). In that case there was no visible appearance of Jehovah upon a cloud; but it was language which the prophet adopted, in order to express the evident hand of God in the calamities of Egypt. The same thing may be said of the language of Christ upon the present occasion."

Dr. Hammond interprets Christ's coming, to be a "coming in the exercise of his kingly office to work vengeance on his enemies, and discriminate the faithful believers from them." Again he says:

"The only objection against this interpretation is, that this destruction being wrought by the Roman army, and those as much enemies of Christianity as any, and the very same people that had joined with the Jews to put Christ to death, it doth thereupon appear strange that either of those armies which are called abominable, should be called *God's armies*, or that Christ should be said to come, when in truth it was Vespasian and Titus that thus came against the people. To this I answer, that it is ordinary with God, in the Old Testament, to call those Babylonish, Assyrian heathen armies *his*, which did his work in punishing the Jews, when they rebelled against Him. Christ is fitly said to come, when his ministers do come, that is, when either heathen men, or Satan himself, who are executioners of God's will, when they think not of it, are permitted by Him to work destruction on his enemies."

There was such an intimate connection between the establishment of Christ's kingdom, and the breaking of the Jewish power, that those events are spoken of simultaneously, and one had such an

important bearing upon the other, that they are associated together, and embraced in the same purposes as means and ends. Doubtless the destruction of that ill-fated city entered into the divine purpose, as a means to the advancement of the Word of God, inasmuch as it crippled the persecuting power of the Jews, weakened their opposition to the cause of Christ, so that the Word of God could have free course and be glorified. It entered into the divine purpose as a means to the better establishment of the kingdom of God; but that destruction did not constitute the main object of Christ's coming, and formed no part of his glory. It removed one great obstacle to the establishment of Christianity. Christ's kingdom here refers to the dispensation of grace and truth manifested to the world through him. And we have already seen, that some who heard him speak, were to live to see the kingdom of God come with power. The kingdom of God refers here to the system of religion Christ came to establish — the gospel kingdom, which was not fully established till the persecuting Jews were humbled by the destruction of their magnificent city, their power broken, and they subjugated and dispersed. Then the kingdom of God was fully established in the earth, the Word of God run, had free course, and was glorified, and converts were multiplied to the faith of the Lord Jesus.

It is evident that Christ did not expect his kingdom would fully come, till the Mosaic economy

should end, which did not occur till Jerusalem was destroyed, the civil polity of the Jews was taken away, their temple demolished, their altars laid in ruins, and they brought into subjection to another power. THEN should Christ's spiritual kingdom be set up in the earth, and established on the ruins of Judaism. He came with power to demolish the reign of Judaism, and in glory to establish his own spiritual kingdom.

The destruction of Jerusalem was to the disciples a deeply interesting event, for, to them, it was a sign that the kingdom of God should come with power. That we are correct upon this point, appears evident from the language of Luke xxi. 24–32, inclusive, where the destruction of that city is foretold in the following language:

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; mens' hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads: for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves

that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled."

This language throws much light upon the subject. After the disciples were instructed concerning the signs which should precede the destruction of that ill-fated city, Christ says: "So likewise YE, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." The kingdom of God should immediately succeed the downfall of that city. Then the disciples should lift up their heads, "for your redemption draweth nigh." That is, they were to be delivered from those severe persecutions to which they had been subject for embracing the truth. Their persecutors were humbled, and the kingdom of God was more successfully preached. Dr. Barnes comments thus on the phrase, "kingdom of God nigh at hand":

"That is, from the time God will signally build up his kingdom. It shall be fully established when the Jewish polity shall come to an end; when the temple shall be destroyed, and the Jews scattered abroad. Then the power of the Jews shall come to an end; they shall no longer be able to persecute you; and you shall be completely delivered from all these trials and calamities in Judea."

Having thus learned when Christ was to come in his kingdom, and in the glory of his Father, we

ascertain when all the events spoken of in the parable of the sheep and goats took place. We are now prepared to understand the preceding context.

In the preceding chapter, we learn that Jesus had spoken of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the terrible fate that awaited the inhabitants of that magnificent city. The disciples desiring more information concerning the fearful calamity to which the Master had alluded, familiarly addressed him in the following language: "Tell us *when* shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world" (*aion*) or AGE? The word here translated world is *aion*, from which *aionion*, rendered everlasting in the text, is derived.

We read of the end of the world, or *aion*, in 1 Cor. x. 11, Heb. ix. 26. This cannot mean eternity, for eternity has no end! The discourse of our Lord, recorded in the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew, contains a full reply to these queries of the disciples. The gospel of the kingdom was to be proclaimed very extensively prior to the destruction of that great city, though not as successfully as afterward. While many would remain faithful to the Master's cause, others, through severe persecution, would turn back again to the weak and beggarly elements of Judaism. From the 5th to the 28th verse, inclusive, of the 24th chapter, Jesus enumerates the signs which should precede the destruction of Jerusalem; and at the 29th verse, he predicts its downfall, by saying that

the sun shall be darkened, the stars fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. This was in accordance with the ancient mode of speech. Fearful calamities and temporal national judgments were indicated by representing great convulsions in nature. See Isaiah xiii. 10; xxxiv.; Ezek. xxxii.; Joel ii.

Jesus then indicates the nearness of the events by the "Parable of the fig tree":

"When it putteth forth leaves we know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

By this similitude, the disciples were instructed in regard to the end of the world, (*aion*) or age. And to impress this truth still more sensibly upon their minds, he confines the fulfillment of all the events he had mentioned, to that generation; verse 34: "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Upon this passage, Dr. Whitby comments as follows:

"These words, *this age* or *generation shall not pass away*, afford a full demonstration that all which Christ had mentioned hitherto, was to be accomplished, not at the time of the conversion of the Jews, or at the final day of judgment, but in that very age, or whilst some of that generation of men lived; for the phrase never bears any other sense in the New Testament, than the men of this age."

The Son of man should come with power and

great glory, and should send forth his angels, or ministers, or apostles, to gather together such as had been faithful in different places, where the gospel of the kingdom had been preached. Those who professed his religion are compared to ten virgins; those who were wise gave heed to his instructions, while the foolish turned away from the truth. The object of this parable was to inculcate watchfulness, which is followed by another concerning faithfulness. Then the parable of the sheep and goats is introduced, the object of which is to represent the separation that should take place between the wise and faithful, and the foolish and unfaithful. Those who remained true and faithful should inherit the gospel kingdom, while those who opposed the gospel and persecuted the disciples were to suffer in the general calamities which were to come upon that nation. The Christians who were in the enjoyment of gospel privileges, were said to be on the right hand, while the enemies of Christ being in a state of condemnation and misery, were said to be on the left hand. This simply represents the different conditions of the friends and enemies of the truth. The prominent opposers of the Savior's religion, were called the devil and his angels; and after they had filled up the measure of their iniquities, they were to suffer *age-lasting* punishment, while the righteous, or faithful Christians, were in possession of everlasting life, a spiritual life they enjoyed as long as they remained faithful. The subject had no reference to the immortal resurrec-

tion world, but had exclusive application to this life. The eternal life is the life the believer enjoys in this world, by being brought to the knowledge of the truth. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John xvii. 3. "He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life." John iii. 36, and vi. 47. The true Christian believer lives NOW in the enjoyment of everlasting life.

Thus we see that it is not necessary to go into the future world to enjoy eternal life, for the true Christian believer is in possession of everlasting life; neither are men obliged to go into the immortal state of existence to suffer everlasting punishment. Both can be experienced in this life; one enjoyed and the other suffered. And as the subject under consideration had no reference to the future world, both the life and the punishment referred to, might end in this world. As long as the disciples loved and obeyed their Master, they lived in the enjoyment of eternal life; but when they forgot him, and heeded not his teachings, and he upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, (Mark xvi. 14,) then they did not enjoy everlasting life. The enemies of Christ suffered everlasting punishment. The severe judgments and calamities to come upon them were spoken of under the figure of fire. The prominent adversaries of Christ and their subordinate associates were called the devil and his angels. (Matt. xxv. 41).

1. To this view, it may be objected that ALL

NATIONS were not gathered together at the time Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman army, and consequently, that our application of this parable is incorrect. This language, we reply, is not to be understood according to its literal import. The account itself is *parabolic*, and every expression cannot be interpreted according to stringent literality, and many erroneous views obtain in attempting to explain figurative language literally. Other passages clearly indicate the meaning of this. Christ informed his disciples that they should be hated of ALL NATIONS for his name's sake. (Matt. xxiv. 9.) This language, however, is not to be understood in its absolute sense. The gospel was to be preached to all nations, previous to the end of the Jewish economy, or age. (Verse 14.) This comprehensive expression embraced the different provinces and kingdoms into which the Jewish people were divided, referred to in the 7th verse, where we read that *nation* shall rise against *nation*, and kingdom against kingdom. Commentators tell us that "The terms *nation* and *kingdom* were sometimes applied by the Jews to any state, province, or even a separate *municipal district*."—*Paige*. Seeing then how this language was used by the Jews, we understand how the disciples were hated by *all nations*, and in what sense the same all nations were gathered together at the destruction of Jerusalem. At the time of that awful siege, large numbers of the Jewish people were gathered from the different provinces of Judea, so

that it was true in the sense in which this language was designed to be understood, that *all nations* were gathered before the Son of man at his coming.

2. It may be said that the parable must refer to the immortal world, because the fire was prepared for the *devil and his angels.* This does not legitimately follow. The scriptural usage of the word sustains our interpretation. The word here rendered *devil*, is *diabolos*, which means *adversary*, an enemy, or opposer. Hence, the prominent persecutors of the early Christians were called the DEVIL, thus: "Behold the DEVIL shall cast some of you into prison." Rev. ii. 10. This term is very often applied to human beings; and is translated *devil*, *false accusers* and *slanderers.* It is applied to those who opposed Christianity, and who were the adversaries of the cross. Judas was called a *devil*, (John vi. 70,) which meant simply false accuser. The wives of deacons were exhorted not to be *devils*, or *slanderers*, as translated. (1 Tim. iii. 11.) In 2 Tim. iii. 3, wicked men are spoken of as *devils*, (*diaboloi*) or *false accusers*, as it is rendered. They were adversaries, or enemies to Christ. Paul exhorts that the aged women be in behavior, as becometh holiness, not false accusers, (*diabolos.*) (Titus ii. 3).

Again, Paul says: "Your adversary, the devil, (*diabolos*) as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." 1 Peter v. 8. The wicked, persecuting Jews were walking about seeking

the destruction of Christians; they were the adversary, the devil, referred to. They were the adversaries of Christ and his followers; hence it is said, "All his adversaries were ashamed." The prominent persecuting Jews and their agents were the devil and his angels.

3. But, says one, suppose we admit this, the fire was "*everlasting*," and consequently must be in the immortal world. This does not follow. This term is frequently used in the Bible in connection with events that have a limited duration. The land of Canaan was given to the Jews for an *everlasting* possession, (Gen. xvii. 8,) and yet they possessed it comparatively only for a short time. The hills are called *everlasting*, (Gen. xlix. 26,) and yet they are not *endless* in duration. The Levitical priesthood is called *everlasting*, (Num. xxv. 13,) but it was abolished by Christ. (Heb. vii. 11, 12.) Severe national judgments are often spoken of under the figure of *fire* and *furnace of fire*. "Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the *fuel of the fire*." Isa. ix. 19. This denotes simply the destruction and temporal ruin of the people. Again: "The Lord's *fire* is in Zion, and his *furnace in Jerusalem*." Isa. xxxi. 9. See also Jer. xvii. 27; Ezek. xx. 47, 48; xxii. 18–22.

4. The same word is applied both to the life of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked, and the same argument that will prove the limited duration of one, will prove the limited duration of

the other. This objection, which is so constantly urged by our opponents, is regarded by them as quite too formidable for refutation. And yet it is entirely without force. The mere use of the word proves nothing in regard to duration. It is the subject to which it is applied that always limits and defines its meaning and indicates the sense in which it is used. Macknight says of *aion* and *aionios* thus: "These words being ambiguous, are always to be understood according to the nature and circumstances of the things to which they are applied." And though this learned divine urges these words in support of the doctrine of endless punishment, yet he adds:

"At the same time, I must be so candid as to acknowledge, that the use of these terms, forever, eternal and everlasting, in other passages of Scripture, shows that they who understand these words in a limited sense, when applied to punishment, put no forced interpretation upon them."—*Truths of Gospel History*, *p.* 28.

It is not the adjective that defines the meaning of the subject; but it is the subject which defines invariably the meaning of the adjective; just as we say a *wise* man and the only *wise* God. It is the subject that defines in each case the meaning of the word *wise*. So we say, the *great* God, and the *great* man, but who would say that the word must have the same meaning in each case? We may say that the *great* God inflicts a *great* punishment upon a *great* nation; but does the word *great* when

applied to punishment and nation have the same meaning as when applied to God? And shall we say that the same argument which will prove that the nation shall pass away; will prove that God will pass away? The same word is applied to different things in the same passage. "The *everlasting* mountains were scattered; the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are *everlasting*." Habakkuk iii. 6. Here the word everlasting is applied to the mountains, and also to God. Shall we say, if the mountains fail, that God will cease to exist? It is the nature of the subject in each case that defines the meaning of this word. When applied to the mountains, it has a limited signification; when applied to God, it is unlimited as God himself. But the passage has no particular reference to the immortal world. The life spoken of, refers to the moral, spiritual life which the believer enjoyed in this world. The believer *had everlasting life*. (John v. 24.) "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John iii. 14. Both the life and the punishment had reference to this world.

Although severe judgments were inflicted upon the Jews, so that they were banished from the presence of the Lord, and suffered *age-lasting* punishment, yet Paul assures us that all Israel shall be saved. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all." Rom. xii. 32.

UNQUENCHABLE FIRE.

"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."—MARK ix. 43, 44.

To understand much of the figurative language of the New Testament, we must appeal often to the Old Testament, and learn in what sense similar phraseology is employed therein.

We should bear in mind, that neither the text nor context affirm that the "worm" and "fire" are in the future, immortal world. This is entirely assumed, not proved. True, the passage asserts that the fire shall not be quenched; but a brief allusion to the Old Testament will show that such language was understood by the ancient Hebrews, to refer to things connected with this life, and never to eternity. In proof of this, we appeal, first, to Leviticus vi. 12, 13. The Lord is represented as speaking to Moses, concerning sacrifices and offerings, as follows:

"And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out; and the priest shall burn wood upon it every morning, and lay the

burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace-offerings. The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out."

Here it is distinctly asserted, that the fire kindled upon the altar in Moses' day, should *never* go out, and yet all admit that it ceased to burn centuries ago! Such language was never understood by the ancient Hebrews to teach that the fire was endless. And yet this language is as expressive of endless duration as that which we are considering. One passage affirms, that "the fire shall never be quenched;" the other, that "the fire shall never go out."

Again, in Isaiah xxxiv. 9, 10, we read of the temporal calamities coming upon the land of Idumea, in the following bold figurative style:

"The streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it forever and ever."

This language is similar to that employed in the text: "It shall *not* be quenched; the smoke shall go up forever and ever." And all this referred to events long since transpired; to the severe chastisements, judgments, and temporal calamities then about to come upon the land and people of Idumea. And yet, it is said that the fire shall not be quenched, and the smoke shall go up forever and

ever. When it says that the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust into brimstone, and the land become burning pitch — the language is not to be understood literally, but as having reference to national ruin and severe temporal calamities; just as the revelator spoke of the lake of fire and brimstone, to denote the severe national judgments about to come upon Jerusalem, greater, as the Savior declared, than had been or ever should be again, which overwhelmed that magnificent city in ruin, which destruction is called their *second* death.

Of Jerusalem, it is recorded in Jeremiah xvii. 27, thus: "I will kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." This figurative language was employed to portray divine judgments coming upon Jerusalem in this life.

Another instance of this bold, figurative style of speech among the ancients, may be found in Ezekiel xx. 47, 48:

"And say to the forest of the south: Hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree; the flaming flame shall not be quenched; and all faces from the south to the north shall be burnt therein. And all flesh shall see that I, the Lord, have kindled it; it shall not be quenched."

Although it is here distinctly asserted, that the fire shall not be quenched, yet no intelligent man

nderstands the language literally. Learned di-
ines and commentators apply this passage to tem-
oral judgments, which were to come upon Jerusa-
em.

We think that Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist
ommentator, has given the true interpretation to
he passage. He says:

"The forest of the south field is the city of Jeru-
alem; which was as full of inhabitants as the for-
st is of trees. I will kindle a fire, i. e., I will
end war; and it shall devour every green tree,
. e., the most eminent and substantial of the in-
abitants; and every dry tree, i. e., the lowest and
neanest also; it shall not be quenched, i. e. till the
and be utterly ruined."

We would call the reader's attention to the inter-
retation of this learned orthodox divine, of the
xpression, "The fire shall not be quenched, i. e.,
ll the land be utterly ruined." It had no refer-
nce to the immortal world; only to temporal ruin.

Having thus seen in what sense such figurative
nguage as is found in the text was employed, in
e Old Testament, we pass to consider more par-
cularly its meaning and specific application. The
iginal word, here translated hell, is *gehenna.* It
ccurs twelve times in the New Testament, and is
variably applied to the Jews, and never once to
e Gentiles! This is a remarkable fact, and is
naccountable neglect and omission on the suppo-
tion that the Gentiles were in danger of *gehenna*
e. Paul was a preacher to the Gentiles, as he

himself informs us, in faith and verity; and y in all his fourteen epistles, we find no ment made of hell. Once he speaks of the destructi of *hades*. (1 Cor. xv. 55.) He was a faithful prea er, and declared the whole counsel of God, and certainly would have threatened the Gentiles wi *gehenna* fire had this constituted any part of divine counsel. But this word hell is not found any of Paul's epistles, nor even in John's gosp which was written for the benefit of the Gentile Had the Gentiles been in danger of *gehenna* fi it is fair to presume that they would have be warned against it. Hebrew scholars tell us th *gehenna* is derived from two Hebrew words, *Ge* which means land, and *Hinnom*, the name of t individual who owned the land — meaning, land Hinnom. This land, or vale of Hinnom, bordere upon the southeast part of Jerusalem, where it represented on all correct maps of Palestine.

We learn from the Old Testament, that, in th valley of Hinnom, sacrifices were offered by th sinful and idolatrous Jews, to an idol god, calle Moloch. This idol, which had the head of an and the body of a man, being hollow, was heat with fire within, and upon its arms its benighte worshipers laid their children, and there they we burned to death. This horrid place was sometim called Topheth — the name being derived, as som think, from a word signifying *drum*, because drum were beaten to drown the shrieks of the burnin children.

To destroy idolatry among the Jews, King Jo-
ah caused this place to be defiled, by making it
e receptacle of all the filth and offal of the city
f Jerusalem. Some writers tell us that the car-
sses of beasts and the bodies of criminals were
t into *gehenna.* That this putrifying mass
ight not taint the atmosphere, fires were kept
nstantly burning, to consume this offal and gar-
ge thrown into this valley. And as those parts
hich remained unconsumed would necessarily
sed worms, hence came the expression, "where
eir worm dieth not, and their fire is not
enched."

In proof of what is here asserted in regard to
e valley of Hinnom, we refer the reader to 2
ings xxiii. 10:

"And he [Josiah] defiled Topheth, which is in
he valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man
ight make his son or daughter to pass through
he fire to Moloch."

Here, reference is made to the Jews offering
uman sacrifices to their idol god. After this
lace was thus defiled, and came to be regarded
ith so much detestation and loathing, it was
mployed figuratively to represent temporal calami-
es. It was perfectly natural for a Jew to say of
ny guilty wretch—"He ought to be cast into
henna"—thus making this place an emblem of
unishment coming upon the sinful in this life. It
as referred to by the prophets to denote severe

national judgments. Jeremiah speaks of the desolation of Jerusalem as follows:

"I will break THIS CITY, as one that breaketh a potter's vessel that cannot be made whole again; and I will bury them in Tophet till there is no place to bury. Thus will I do unto this place, saith the Lord, and to the inhabitants thereof, and even make this city as Tophet, and the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the king of Judah shall be defiled as the place of Tophet." Jer. xix. 11.

These scriptures indicate clearly that *gehenna* was employed, in the Old Testament, to represent temporal calamities and national judgments to come upon Jerusalem. We are not informed by the sacred penman, that it is employed in any new or different sense. It is referred to as though the people addressed perfectly understood its meaning; and had any new signification been given to the term, the presumption is that the people would have been so informed.

In confirmation of what we have said, we call the attention of the reader to a passage found in the last chapter of Isaiah, the last verse, which reads as follows:

"And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die; neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

There is such a similarity between the phraseology of this passage and the one under consideration,

at some suppose our Lord had this scripture in
s mind when he uttered the text. Both speak
the worm dying not, and the fire not being
ıenched, and both refer to severe temporal calam-
es.

Eminent orthodox divines admit that these ex-
essions have reference to this world. Dr. Park-
rst, of the orthodox church, says thus:

"Our Lord seems to allude to the worm which
ntinually preyed on the dead carcasses that were
st out into the valley of Hinnom, (*gehenna*,) and
the perpetual fire kept up to consume them."

And the late Professor Stuart, of Andover,
ass., an eminent orthodox theologian, says:

"In the valley of Hinnom, (*gehenna*,) perpetual
e was kept up, in order to consume the offal
ıich was deposited there; and, as the same offal
ould breed worms, hence came the expression—
ıere their worm dieth not and their fire is not
ıenched."

We have already seen that Tophet was a place
the valley of Hinnom, where sacrifices were
ered to an idol god, called Moloch; and of Jeru-
lem it was said: "I will make *this city* even as
phet," which denoted simply, the desolation and
ırful judgments coming upon that wicked city.
this sense it is referred to in the text. We are
w prepared to understand the language under
nsideration, and its relevancy to those to whom
was addressed.

"If thy hand offend thee, cut it off," etc. This

being highly figurative language, the literal hand is referred to only by way of illustration. The meaning evidently is this: let nothing prevent you from embracing my truth and system of religion and becoming my disciples, though dear to you as a member of your body—dear as a hand or an eye. As though the Savior had said: "Here is my kingdom of truth and righteousness, with its blessed principles and soul-inspiring hopes; now part with everything sooner than part with me and my truth." Those who embraced the Savior's religion, and became subjects of his spiritual kingdom, entered into life. Such passed from death unto life; from moral blindness and spiritual darkness into the marvelous light of divine truth. It was better thus to enter into life, to embrace Christ's gospel, even if called to part with friends and houses and lands, than to reject Christ and his religion, and suffer in those terrible judgments which would come on that ungodly people, figuratively represented by *gehenna* fire.

In the days of Christ, many did not embrace his religion, on account of the deep-rooted hostility to his cause, and the opposition such received from their friends, who madly and bitterly persecuted them for following the despised Nazarene. It required great moral courage, in the primitive days of Christianity, to become one of Christ's disciples. Those who embraced his religion were called upon to make great personal sacrifices. Many did not confess him through fear of being cast out of the

synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Kindred and friends opposed all who became his followers; so that the father was set against the son, and the daughter against the mother, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law, and a man's foes were those of his own house. All this was known to the Savior; and yet he says that it is better to enter into life thus maimed, thus persecuted and forsaken, than to reject the truth, and suffer in those direful woes about to come upon that sinful nation. Jesus would have his disciples forsake all for him, father and mother, if need be, and houses and lands.

Though his followers were called to suffer the loss of all things; though the hand of persecution might be raised against kindred and friends, yet, better enter into life *thus maimed*, than to cling to those friends and share with them the judgments of God, figuratively represented by *gehenna* fire. Jesus required his disciples to forsake all for him. He said: "Whoso loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." Those who loved ease and fame and popularity more than him and his unpopular cause, were not worthy of him. As though Jesus had said: "In embracing my cause, now unpopular, now scorned and rejected by the world, the chief priests and rulers, you may be called upon to part with something dear to you as a member of your body; some dear friend may turn coldly from you and forsake you; it may be like severing a limb from the body; like cutting

off a hand, or plucking out an eye; yet, better enter into life thus maimed; better cherish the hope of everlasting life at this great sacrifice, than to reject the truth, and remain in a state of unbelief and moral blindness."

If thy hand offend thee, or cause thee to offend, cut it off. That is, if one dear to you as a hand, should cause you to offend against the truth, and abandon Christ, turn away from such, though dear to you as a member of your body. Better enter into life thus maimed; better embrace the truth at this great sacrifice, than to suffer in those judgments which will come upon those who reject the truth.

Fidelity to Christ and his cause, under all circumstances, is the practical sentiment here inculcated. We should adhere firmly to the truth under all the trials and persecutions of the world. Though his truth may be never so unpopular, yet we should bind it to our hearts as the pearl of great price, and be ready to exclaim with the poet—

> "Should all the forms that men devise
> Assault my faith with treacherous art,
> I'd call them vanity and lies,
> And bind the gospel to my heart."

Though friends, whom we love, may assault our faith, and turn coldly from us, yet we are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ—that gospel which is good news of great joy unto all people.

We are willing to labor and suffer reproach for trusting in the living God, who is the Savior of all men. Many of us have embraced the doctrines of the great Teacher through much tribulation and persecution. Some of our friends and kindred have forsaken us; have called us hard names—infidels and heretics. Though we have suffered the loss of many things dear to us, yet we have felt it better thus to enter into life, and have the peace of God, which passeth knowledge, and the sweet approbation of our own consciences. God help us to be faithful to our own enlightened convictions, and own Christ as the Savior of the world, unto whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.

THE SECOND DEATH.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead that were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."—REVELATION XX. 12–14.

As many erroneous ideas have been entertained in regard to this language of the revelator, and as many mistaken opinions still prevail concerning the second death, we propose to give the subject a thorough examination.

Human creeds teach that endless misery is the second death which man is to suffer in the immortal world. It is believed that the term "hell," "lake of fire," and "second death," do not refer to different places or states of being, but all have reference to the same place, and denote the same awful state of suffering after death. Now, on the supposition that "HELL" means a place of suffering in the immortal world, as many contend, it cannot be *endless* in duration, for death and hell delivered up the dead that were in them; hence,

if delivered from hell, as the revelator informs us, the suffering certainly was not endless! Besides, we are nowhere informed that those delivered from hell returned back again.

Some have thought that apostatizing from the faith was the second death. Man is represented in the Bible as being dead in trespasses and sins, and when such have been quickened, born of God, and renewed in the spirit and temper of their minds, and been transformed into newness of life by the spirit of grace and truth, and have afterwards fallen away — backslidden from the faith — and turned back again to the beggarly elements of the world, they are spoken of by an apostle as being twice dead, or suffering a second death. All this is doubtless true, and such might suffer not only a second, but a third and fourth death, for as often as they should fall back from a moral quickening, or moral life, they would be dead in sin again. This exposition of the subject does not appear to us to be what the revelator intended by the second death, referred to in our text. A more obvious and natural interpretation to our mind is, that a national death is spoken of, a temporal destruction, which was to come upon the Jewish nation soon after the book of Revelation was written; a destruction more severe than had ever visited a nation, and greater indeed than ever should be again.

It is proper here to remark that the book of Revelation was written previously to the second

destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. While learned and distinguished biblical divines do not agree upon this point, we think there is sufficient evidence in the book itself to warrant the belief that it was written prior to the second overthrow of the Jewish nation by Titus, and the dispersion of the chosen people of God among the nations of the earth.

In the short preface to the book of Revelation, we are twice informed, that what was contained in the book itself was soon to be accomplished — the time was near at hand for the fulfillment of the vision. In the first verse we are informed that Jesus Christ revealed unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass. And in the third verse, those who heard and read the prophecy, were commanded to keep and treasure up those things which were written — they were near — not far off — but at hand. And after the vision had been made known, to remind the people again that the things written were soon to be fulfilled, we read as follows in the last chapter of this book:

"And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly."

This language clearly indicates to our mind that the prophecies contained in this book were soon to come to pass, and not that untold ages were to elapse before they could be fulfilled. In olden time the prophets were commanded to seal up the

saying of their prophecy, when the time was not at hand, or when the things prophesied were not soon to be fulfilled. But when the events predicted were soon to be accomplished, the vision was commanded not to be sealed, for the time was at hand. Hence the revelator was NOT to seal up the words of his prophecy, for the time of fulfillment was near at hand. "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand." Rev. xxii. 10.

In Revelation, Christ is represented as coming quickly — and "coming in clouds, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." Throughout the Evangelists similar language is employed to represent the second overthrow of the Jewish nation, and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. xxiv. 30.

The revelator says, "Behold, he cometh with clouds;" Matthew says, "The Son of man cometh in the clouds of heaven." The revelator says, "And all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him;" Matthew says, "And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn." Both have reference to the second destruction of the Jewish nation.

The context sets forth in highly figurative lan-

guage, the awful woes and calamities which were to come upon the house of Israel as a retribution for sin. What has been predicted was all summed up in this phrase—"This is the second death." And hence this language clearly implies that there must have been a death previous to this, somewhat similar in its nature. As this national death of the Jews is called the *second* death, there would be no propriety in this language unless they had suffered a death before this; for if the revelator were describing their first national death, he certainly would not have spoken of the terrible judgments coming upon the Jewish nation as their *second* death. It is evident, therefore, that the people referred to must have suffered a death previous to this. We find upon examination that it was so. They had once before lost their national life, and consequently died a national death. That was their *first* death. And as the revelator describes more overwhelming calamities to come upon them, and greater destruction, he very properly speaks of it as their *second* death.

The second death was the second destruction of the Jews by Titus, a Roman general, who successfully led the Roman army against the Jewish people, and destroyed them as a nation, so that they have been suffering everlasting punishment for the last eighteen hundred years. Then they lost their national power and national existence for the second time; which was called their *second* death. Their *first* destruction was when they were led into

Babylonish captivity for seventy years; then they lost their national existence and were said to be dead. Then they were led away from their religious altars and became subject to heathen despots. That calamity constituted their *first* national death. They had no national existence as before. Their restoration from this captivity to their land again, to their altars and temple worship, is spoken of as a resurrection to life. It was like coming up out of their graves; hence, said the Lord, referring to their deliverance, "I will open your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." They are represented not only as being dead, but as being in their graves. For instruction upon this point, we refer the reader to Ezekiel xxxvii. 12–14:

"Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

Here we learn that the Jews, or house of Israel, are represented as being slain and in their graves, but they were to come up out of their graves and live again in their own land, as the 14th verse informs us.

This is highly figurative language, and must not

be understood literally. It represents the low state of the Jewish people during their seventy years' captivity. While yet individually alive, they were nationally dead and in their graves. But after they were delivered from captivity and restored to their national privileges and religious altars, they again became a haughty, proud and rebellious people, and ultimately filled up the measure of their iniquity by crucifying the Lord's Anointed, and put him to an open shame. Again were severe national judgments to come upon them, and they were to lose their national privileges and national life; and this was their second death.

The highly figurative language employed to describe the second death, was in accordance with the ancient mode of speech. Temporal destruction and the overthrow of nations were described by representing nature as undergoing great changes—the sun being darkened, and the moon turned into blood, and the stars falling from heaven.

"Fire" was another common figure chosen to set forth direful woes and severe national judgments and calamities. Perhaps no figure was more common among the ancients than this. The Jews are spoken of in the Old Testament as being cast into a furnace of fire, and we are twice informed that the Lord's fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.

This lake of fire was a figurative expression designed to represent the terrible national calamities coming upon the house of Israel. We find

similar phraseology throughout the Scriptures. In the 22d chapter of Ezekiel, 17th to 22d verses, inclusive, we read as follows:

"And the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Because ye are all become dross, behold therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I, the Lord, have poured out my fury upon you."

This again is highly figurative language, descriptive of the severe temporal judgments to come upon the Jewish people. The people were to be gathered in the midst of Jerusalem, as the 19th verse informs us, and the next words are, "And I will leave you there, [that is, in Jerusalem,] and melt you." The meaning of this is, that the people should be visited with fearful woes and severe national judgments. In the 9th chapter of Isaiah, we read that wickedness burneth as the fire, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire, the meaning of which is, that they should be de-

stroyed. In the 34th chapter of Isaiah, we have an account of a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. The destruction should be great, and the slaughter terrible, so that the smell should be offensive and the slain should be cast out. At the 9th verse, what was to occur, is figuratively described as follows: "And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch." This was highly figurative language, and denoted simply national ruin and destruction.

It was no new thing for the revelator to represent the overthrow and destruction of a nation, by such figurative expressions as "fire," and even "lake of fire." Regarding then the second death as the second destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans, we come to a more specific consideration of the subject.

"I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened," etc. This refers to those who rejected Christ, and spurned his teachings and religion. Rejecting his gospel, their names were not written in the book of life, that is, they did not embrace the gospel of life and immortality. The gospel of Christ was the book of life. Those whose names were found written therein, were such as embraced the gospel by faith and made practical its divine teachings. They suffered not the second death. They did not suffer in those calamities which came upon that ungodly race—not a Christian perished in those national judg-

ments. Those who endured faithful to the end were saved as the Savior promised.

The books were opened, out of which the dead were judged. These doubtless referred to the books of the Jewish laws to which even the Jews had been unfaithful, they having made void the law of God by their traditions, and taught for doctrines the commandments of men. They were judged out of those things written in the books, according to their works.

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them." The meaning of this language is, that nothing could screen the people from impending judgments and a righteous retribution. After they had filled up the measure of their iniquity, in vain could they seek concealment anywhere. In vain would they cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them. They must then be brought to judgment and punished. Similar language is found in the book of Amos ix. 2, 3:

"Though they dig into hell (*sheol*), thence shall my hand take them, and though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down; and though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them."

This language was designed to teach simply that the people could not conceal themselves from the

retributive justice of God. In vain would they seek refuge in death and hell. (*Sheol.*) Their covenant with death should not stand, and their agreement with hell should be disannuled. Dr. Adam Clarke remarks as follows upon this passage:

"Though they *dig into hell*—though they should get into the deepest caverns; though they climb up to heaven—get to the most inaccessible heights—I will drag them up from the one, and pull them down from the other. Though they hide themselves—all these are metaphorical expressions, to show the impossibility of escape."

In the same metaphorical sense the language we are considering should be understood; and when it says that the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hell, or *hades*, gave up the dead which were in them—it means simply that nothing would screen the guilty from righteous retribution; they should be judged according to their works, and punished for their sins. There should be no escape after they had filled up the measure of their iniquity, and merited retribution. Severe national judgments should come upon them, and they again should be dispersed, lose their national life, and be cast out as a by-word and reproach among the nations of the earth, and suffer everlasting punishment.

The same general sentiment is taught in the 21st chapter, at the 8th verse, where we are informed that the fearful, and unbelieving, and murderers, sorcerers, and idolaters, etc., should have their part

in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone — which is the *second death.* When the Jewish nation suffered destruction for the second time — which, indeed, was their second national death — the Christians were saved from these impending judgments, their names were written in the book of life; that is, they gave heed to the instruction of Christ, obeyed his commands, had passed from death unto life, and consequently were not hurt of the second death; they escaped those judgments which came upon the ungodly Jews.

Again — "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Those who had been quickened from dead works to serve the living God, through the Savior's teachings, were said to be morally and spiritually raised. "*Awake* thou that sleepest and *arise* from the dead," etc. The Christians did thus rise from their dead state — they were once dead in trespasses and in sins — when quickened they were raised from the dead, from their state of moral, spiritual death, and thus had part in the first resurrection. And on such the second death had no power. Enduring unto the end faithful, they were saved from sin, and saved from the woes which came upon the unfaithful and unbelieving. Eusebius, the historian, says that not a Christian suffered. They were priests of God, true and faithful followers of Christ, and were exalted to a high rank in the Christian Church, and live and reign with Christ.

SALVATION AND DAMNATION.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.—JOHN v. 28, 29.

It is supposed by many that this passage of scripture is descriptive of scenes and events which are to take place at the resurrection of man from the dead, when, it is thought, the whole universe of intelligent beings will be raised bodily and be brought to judgment. Here, it is said, we are expressly informed that a portion of the human race will be raised from the dead to immortal life and blessedness; and another portion of the intelligent creation will be raised bodily, and consigned to the regions of dark despair, to wail and writhe in ceaseless anguish! It is affirmed, that the resurrection of life spoken of, has direct reference to the felicity which awaits the righteous in heaven; and that the resurrection of damnation refers to the awful misery which will be inflicted on such as die impenitent and sinful. Hence, it is said, that this scripture teaches the doctrine of rewards and punishments in the immortal world—for the good and

evil deeds of this life. Such, in brief, is the popular interpretation of this language of the Savior. We regard it as unwarrantable and objectionable for the following reasons:

1. It is based entirely upon assumption, and takes for granted the very thing to be proved! It assumes that a time is coming in the divine economy, when there will be a general resurrection of man, bodily, from the grave. It does not say that the material body is to be raised from the dead; nor that all men are to be judged in the future world; nor that some will be rewarded with eternal life and felicity for their good works, and some punished with eternal misery for their wicked deeds.

People first believe these doctrines, and then introduce this scripture as furnishing proof of the sentiments embraced. True, it speaks of a resurrection of life and a resurrection of damnation; but it says nothing concerning the resurrection of the body. Such a resurrection is no where spoken of in the Scriptures as applying to mankind. The question is asked, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" Paul, in answer to that query, says, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be....It is sown a *natural* body; it is raised a *spiritual* body. That which is first is natural; afterward, that which is spiritual." Such is the scriptural doctrine concerning the immortal resurrection of man from the dead.

Again, this passage does not inform us that the resurrection is simultaneous and general, as the

sacrificial theology asserts. It speaks of those only who are in their graves. On the supposition that the grave here means ground, it only proves that such as have been buried in the earth shall be raised. If it is to be understood literally, it is far from embracing all mankind — having no relation to those who shall be upon the earth at the last day — who, instead of seeing corruption, it is said, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we see that what should be proved in relation to this scripture, is assumed and taken for granted without proof.

2. The common exposition of this text is logically untrue, and hence it is objectionable. In making it teach endless rewards and punishments, it proves too much, and hence logically proves nothing! It would prove universal salvation and universal damnation! It is affirmed that the resurrection of life spoken of, means ceaseless happiness in heaven; and the resurrection of damnation means unending misery. Bearing this interpretation in mind, let us attend to the language employed: "They that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life;" that is, to eternal bliss in heaven. Who have done good? All certainly have done some good in their life-time; then all will be rewarded with eternal life, if the passage has a universal application. No particular kind of goodness is here specified; but simply, they that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life. Every human being, though never so de-

praved, has done some good; hence, all shall be blessed with immortal life, if the common exposition of this passage be correct! So on the other hand, universal damnation is as easily and as logically proved true: "For they that have done evil, shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation." If damnation here means endless wretchedness, then all men must be eternally lost, for all men have done evil. If any deny that all have done good, it will be readily and universally admitted, that all have done evil. And the broad declaration is, they that have done evil shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation! Thus we see that the argument logically proves too much, and consequently proves nothing.

The objector cannot extricate himself from this dilemma, by affirming that some repent before they die; for this text does not say that all shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation, who do not repent before they die; but they that have done evil shall thus come forth; and as all have done evil, so all must be damned, according to the popular interpretation.

3. The common exposition of this scripture makes immortal blessedness depend upon good works; and this sentiment receives no support from the Word of God. According to the passage under consideration, some were to come forth to the resurrection of life, because they had done something that was good; not because they had embraced the true faith, nor on account of the abun-

dant mercy of God, but on account of their good deeds: "They that have done good," etc. This is not only opposed to the Scriptures, but opposed to the sentiments advocated by the dominant sects themselves. They have long made doctrine the test of a man's Christianity; if he has not had an evangelical faith, he has been denounced an infidel. This is the method employed by all the sacrificial churches to ascertain whether a man is a Christian or not. If he does not believe a creed, and certain established doctrines, he is hurled out of the church as unworthy of Christian membership, and consequently, is regarded as unworthy of heaven, and only fit for hell! Such, it is said, will come forth to the resurrection of damnation. Thus faith is made the standard, and not good works. It matters not how kind and benevolent and good a man is, if he have not the true faith, he must be lost. All his morality will only sink him lower into perdition.

Thus we see that if this scripture relate to immortal blessedness, it is to be merited by good works. But this is opposed to the Bible doctrine of a heavenly immortality. Heaven is spoken of as the gift of God; and is not to be attained by good works, but by the abundant mercy of the Infinite Father. We are nowhere informed that man is to be blessed with a resurrection to immortal life, because he has done good; neither that he is to be sent to an endless hell of suffering because he has done evil.

4. The last objection we now present against the common view of the passage under examination is, that it does not harmonize with other portions of the Scriptures, which describe the immortal resurrection of man from the dead.

Christ, speaking of the condition of men in the resurrection world, says that they shall be equal unto the angels in heaven; (Luke xx. 35, 36); and Paul declares that in Christ shall all be made alive; (1 Cor. xv. 22); and that there is no condemnation to such as are in Christ. (Rom. viii. 1.) Now, if all who died in Adam shall be made alive in Christ, and made equal unto the angels of God in heaven, as the Bible teaches, how can such as have done evil be made endlessly wretched? If the common view of the passage be correct, then the Scriptures contradict themselves; but it evidently has no reference to the immortal resurrection of man.

Paul not only informs us that all shall be made alive in Christ, but he had hope towards God for the resurrection of all. But how could he have hoped for the resurrection of all men, if he had believed that a part of the intelligent creation would writhe in ceaseless agony? Could he have hoped for their eternal wretchedness? Never! Had he believed that the resurrection of damnation spoken of, referred to endless woe, he never could have hoped for it. He could have hoped only for such a resurrection as he described in his epistle to the Corinthians: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption;....it is raised in glory;

....it is raised in power;....it is raised a spiritual body. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Having thus shown that the text furnishes no support to the doctrine which is brought forward to substantiate, we pass to its affirmative consideration, and to present what we believe to be its true meaning.

First of all, we should bear in mind that there are two kinds of resurrection spoken of in the Scriptures, just as there are two kinds of death—spiritual and moral death. As a state of sin is spoken of as a state of moral death, so a deliverance from that state is spoken of as a resurrection from that spiritual death; that is, a spiritual exaltation takes place. And as this moral death may be experienced during the natural life, so may this spiritual resurrection be also experienced during this life. Therefore, when we read in the Bible of "dead" and "death," we cannot determine simply from the use of these words that the writer designed to teach the absolute extinction of life; because these terms are employed in a figurative sense, as significant of moral death—as being dead in trespasses and in sin. So when we read in the Scriptures of a resurrection, it does not necessarily refer to the immortal resurrection of man; because there is a moral resurrection spoken of in the Bible, which may be experienced in this world—a spiritual quickening of the sinner and deliverance from

dead works — morally elevating him — raising him to the true dignity of his nature and to the enjoyments of spiritual life. When we read of a resurrection, we should carefully peruse the context, to ascertain whether the writer refers to the immortal resurrection of man; or to a moral resurrection experienced by the true believer in passing from death unto life.

Dr. George Campbell, a learned divine of the orthodox school, in his "Notes" on the Four Gospels, vol. ii., p. 113, says that

"The word *anastasin*, or rather the phrase *anastasis ton nekron*, is, indeed the common term by which the resurrection, properly so called, is denominated in the New Testament. Yet, this is neither the only nor the primitive import of the word *anastasis;* it denotes simply being raised from inactivity to action, or from obscurity to eminence, or a return to such a state after an interruption. The verb *anistemi*, has the like latitude of signification; and both words are used in this extent by the writers of the New Testament, as well as by the LXX. Agreeably, therefore, to the original import, rising from a seat, is properly termed *anastasis;* so in waking out of sleep, or promotion from an inferior condition."

According to this learned divine, who should be regarded as good authority upon this subject, the original word, *anastasis*, translated resurrection, is, indeed the common term by which the resurrection of man from the dead is denominated; yet, he says, that this is not the only, nor even the primitive import of the word. It denotes simply

being raised from inactivity to action or promotion from an inferior condition. Hence, the mere use of the word in the passage we are considering, furnishes no proof that it refers to the resurrection of all men — and, as we have already shown, that it does not refer to the immortal resurrection as described by sacred penmen; hence it must have reference to a moral resurrection — a spiritual exaltation enjoyed by the true believer in this world. Such an application harmonizes with the context, and the primitive import of the word.

The context justifies the conclusion, that the phrase, resurrection of life, refers to the moral life which the Christian enjoys — to the spiritual enjoyment and peace consequent on belief, and a reception of Christian truth. At the 24th verse of the context, Jesus says, "He that heareth my word, [that is, my doctrine, my truth,] and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Those who believed not, were in a state of moral death while in this world; the change wrought in them by belief and adoption of the truth, is spoken of as a resurrection; thus they passed from death unto life eternal, by being brought to the knowledge of God's truth. The believer was morally raised and elevated; spiritually exalted; enjoyed everlasting life; came forth to the resurrection of life, while the unbeliever was in a state of condemnation and death, or came forth to the resurrection of damnation.

Thus we see that those who believed on Christ — embraced his truth and religion — passed from death unto life. The death alluded to here, was not the death of the body, but death in sin. So the "life" spoken of, was a state of mind opposite to death — the life which Christianity brings to the soul by an application of its spirit — spiritual life. The same life and death are referred to by the apostle Paul, in the following language: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. ii. 1. The wicked unbeliever is said to be dead in sin; while the true, Christian believer is said to be alive unto God. The same idea is expressed in other phraseology — "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. v. 14.

At the 25th verse of the context, we read thus: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead [spiritually dead] shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

The phrase "the dead," here, did not embrace all who were dead in sin, but such only as were soon to embrace Christian truth, and through its quickening power, pass from death unto life. This seems evident from the expression, "The hour is coming, and now is," referring to time and events then near at hand. Those only are referred to, who were to believe on Christ by attending on the personal ministration of his word, by receiving the truth from his own lips. Such were to hear the

voice of the Son of God, and be convinced through his own personal labors and preaching. Many thus believed on him, (see John iv. 41, and other places,) and lived the Christian life.

But few Jews, however, were disposed to receive him as the true Messiah. They rejected him, would not honor him, and called him an imposter, and ridiculed the idea that God was with him, as he claimed, and had committed all judgment into his hands. The Jews thought it absurd in the extreme, that Jesus should claim to be the Son of God, and to have power to give life unto man! They were astonished that Jesus claimed to teach by divine authority — such a poor, unlettered uninfluential person! Yet he claimed to have authority to execute judgment — to do God's will and to have power to give everlasting life to all who should believe on him as the Christ of God! This seemed to excite surprise in the minds of the Jews.

"Marvel not at this — surprised though you are, I can tell you of more marvelous things than these, more astonishing things than I have yet told you! The hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall come forth; you affect surprise that any should believe on me and have life through a reception of my truth; you need not, for the time is coming, (he does not say, and now is, as before, for he knew the stubbornness of their hearts,) when all that are in their graves shall hear his voice — that is, his doctrine, or word. Marvel as you do, surprised though you are, yet I will now

tell you what will excite your astonishment still more — you, yourselves will yet come forth to the resurrection of moral life or death, or, in other words, the time is coming when you will see that I am the One to execute judgment, and you will all be judged according to the principles of my religion, and be acquitted or condemned."

As though Jesus had said, "Some, on hearing my gospel, will become my followers and have everlasting life — such will do a good thing by embracing my religion, and shall be rewarded with spiritual life and true Christian enjoyment; while such as refuse my teachings, and reject my religion and truth, shall be condemned as guilty." The meaning seems to be this: The time was nigh at hand, when those dead in sin should be awakened from their lethargy, and be brought forth to judgment, and condemned by Christian principles.

The expression, "all that are in the graves," at the 28th verse, embraces a much larger number of the same class of individuals who are referred to in verse 25th, by the term "dead."

In the Scriptures, mankind are frequently represented as being dead, and sometimes as being in their graves. When a people are in a low state of sin and degradation, they are said to be dead, or in the "dust," or in their "graves." And when they rose out of that state of moral pollution, they were represented as rising from the dead, or coming forth from their graves or out of the dust. In the 37th chapter of Ezekiel, the house of Israel is rep-

resented as being dead and in their graves, and their resurrection from the dead is spoken of in the following language:

"Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves; And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." Ezek. xxxvii. 12–14.

This has no reference to literal death or literal graves. In the passage under consideration, the Jewish people are spoken of as being dead, and those who gave heed to the instructions of Christ, are represented as coming forth to the resurrection of life, though all that were in their "graves" should hear his voice. This language is used here to represent their degraded condition. A state of sin was a state of death. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." The gospel quickened man into moral life; then he came forth out of the dust of the earth — he passed from death into life.

We are sometimes told this interpretation of the passage is forced and unnatural. But when there is not a particular theory to defend, other religionists than ourselves put the same construction upon similar language. In one of the hymns of Dr. Watts, we find the following verse, which candid

people find no difficulty in understanding. They place the same construction upon it that we do upon similar phraseology when found in the Scriptures. The verse reads as follows:

> "But when the Gospel comes,
> It sheds diviner light,
> It calls *dead* sinners from their *tombs*,
> And gives the blind their sight."

The hymn containing this verse is sung in all the pulpits of the land. Thus "sinners" are represented as being dead and in their tombs! The divine light of the gospel "calls these dead sinners from their tombs, and gives the blind their sight." Here sinners are represented as coming forth from their graves. It represents simply, in both cases, the moral influence of divine truth upon the soul. The gospel of Christ "calls dead sinners from their tombs," and bringing them out of their "tombs," or "graves," they come forth to a resurrection of life, joy and peace, and hence are in possession of everlasting life.

The resurrection of life means the spiritual life which the Christian enjoys; the reward consequent on a reception of the truth, such as embraced Jesus' religion passed from death unto life. The same idea is expressed in the exhortation of the apostle: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Those who should come forth to damnation, would be aroused from their state of ignorance and

sin, and stand forth condemned for rejecting Christian truth. They would not awake till they had filled up the measure of their iniquity; then it would be too late to save them from a merited retribution. Though they should suffer punishment for their sin, yet they should finally be redeemed, for all Israel shall be saved. (Rom. xi. 20–32).

We give the following from Lightfoot, an eminent divine of the sacrificial church:

"These words might also be applied to a spiritual resurrection, as were the former, (and so, *coming out of graves* meaneth, Ezek. xxxvii. 12,) the words of the verse following being only translated and glossed thus: and they shall come forth, they that do good, after they hear his voice in the gospel, to the resurrection of life; and they that do evil, after they hear the gospel, unto the resurrection of damnation. But they are more generally understood of the general resurrection," etc.—*Harm. Evang. Part III. John* v. 28.

YE SHALL ALL LIKEWISE PERISH.

"I tell you, Nay: except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."—LUKE xiii. 3.

Many have erroneously supposed that this scripture referred to the future, immortal state of existence, and taught the doctrine of endless suffering for a large portion of the intelligent creation. And this is the common sentiment of the professed Christian Church of the present day, though some learned orthodox divines have given to the passage a different explanation.

But instead of this text having reference to the immortal world, the immediate context plainly shows that it has reference to scenes and events connected with this life. No allusion is made in the context to the resurrection state; it does not say that if the sinner does not repent in time, that he shall be made miserable to all eternity. The context does not furnish the slightest justification for such an assertion.

At the commencement of the chapter, we are informed that there were present with the Savior "some who told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices." This

does not mean that blood was mingled with the sacrifices offered, but while the Galileans were offering sacrifices, they were slain by the authority of Pilate; and, hence, their blood being poured out around the sacrificial altar, it was said to be "mingled with their sacrifices."

It seems that the Jews looked upon this destruction of the Galileans, as coming upon them on account of their great guilt and iniquity. Hence, Jesus said, "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?" There is no proof of this. "I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" or, ye shall perish in like manner, or in a way somewhat similar. As though Jesus had said, "You refer me to some who perished around the altar while offering sacrifice; this you regard as a judgment of God upon their sins; but they were not sinners above all men, because such was their fate. You are equally guilty yourselves; and now I say to you, that unless you turn from your iniquity, you will, ere long, meet with a similar fate; if you go on, you will soon fill up the measure of your iniquity, and perish in like manner."

Here a comparison is instituted between the fate of the Galileans and the fate of the Jews addressed, in case they repented not. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Like whom? we would ask. Answer. Like those Galileans referred to; or, like those eighteen mentioned in the 4th verse,

"upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" or, in a similar way.

How did those referred to perish? We answer, by temporal judgments — they were slain by the sword, around the altar — or, by the falling of the tower of Siloam; the Jews, if they repented not, should perish in like manner, or in a similar way.

It is not said that they should perish like some who had been hurled down to endless woe, by the arm of the Almighty; but they should perish like those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them; that is, in a similar way — by severe temporal calamities and judgments. There would be a striking similarity between the destruction of the Galileans and the destruction of those to whom Jesus refers. When victorious armies should come upon them, they would be slain about the temple, and their blood even would be mingled with their sacrifices.

Josephus informs us that when Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans, hundreds were slain in and about the temple. He says:

"Now round about the altars lay dead bodies heaped one upon another, as at the steps going up to it, ran a great quantity of blood, whither also the dead bodies that were slain above (on the altar) fell down.... One would have thought that the hill itself, on which the temple stood, was seething hot,

as full of fire on every part of it, that the blood was larger in quantity than the fire, and those that were slain more in number than those that slew them; for the ground did nowhere appear visible, for the dead bodies that lay on it."—*Book VI., Chapters IV., V.*

Many orthodox divines have given the text a similar construction. Dr. Adam Clarke comments thus:

"Ye shall all likewise perish. In a like way, in the same manner. This prediction of our Lord was literally fulfilled. When the city was taken by the Romans, multitudes of the priests, etc., *who were going on with their sacrifices*, were slain, and their blood mingled with the blood of their victims; and multitudes were buried under the ruins of the walls, houses and temple."

Dr. Barnes, an eminent Presbyterian divine, says thus:

"You shall all be destroyed in a *similar manner*. ....This was remarkably fulfilled. Many of the Jews were slain in the temple; many while offering sacrifice; thousands perished in a way very similar to the Galileans."

CALMET.—"Jesus Christ here predicts those calamities which overwhelmed them, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans; for then, very many impenitent and unbelieving Jews were buried together under the ruins of their most miserable nation."

WHITBY.—"I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, for the same cause, and many of you after the same manner."

THE DAMNATION OF UNBELIEF.

"He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."—MARK xvi. 16.

This passage is regarded as one of the strongest proof-texts of the doctrine of endless punishment that is found in the sacred Scriptures. It is supposed to have reference to the immortal state of existence, and to teach the endless ruin of all who die in unbelief. Those who believe in this life and are baptized, it is said, will be saved from hell in the life to come; while those who believe not in this world, will be made miserable in the world to come. But the attentive reader will bear in mind that such an interpretation is entirely unsupported by the text. It is assumed. The passage makes no allusion to the immortal condition of mankind. The common exposition of the subject involves its advocates in inexplicable difficulties. It is supposed that water baptism is alluded to in this passage. If so, some particular mode of baptism is referred to; but how are we to determine what mode of baptism is taught? We are not instructed upon this point, and professed Christians entertain quite dissimilar views upon this subject; some con-

tend that immersion is the only mode taught in the Bible, while others contend for sprinkling, and pouring, and plunging. If water baptism be essential to salvation, then it must be administered in some prescribed form. In absence of all proof upon this point, how are we to determine what form to employ?

Again: if belief is absolutely essential to secure immortal felicity, then a true faith is necessary; for to assert that belief is an indispensable requisite to reach the heavenly kingdom, and then affirm that it is unimportant what kind of belief a man embraces, is the height of folly! If a man's eternal salvation depend upon faith in this life, where, amidst the conflicting theories in Christendom, will he go for salvation? Each sect claims to have the true faith, how then can we determine which belief to accept and which to reject?

Again: the exposition of the text which has extensively obtained, sweeps the whole intelligent universe of God down to perdition — for all men have been unbelievers — and the language is positive — he that believeth not SHALL be damned. If all are to be excluded from heaven who believe not, then infants and idiots, and the whole heathen world must be lost forever. The heathen have not heard of Christ, and how could they believe on him of whom they have not heard? Are millions on millions of human beings to be hurled down to perdition for not believing on Christ, when they have not even heard of him?

Again: if we give to the text a universal application, then there are no true believers on earth at the present time, for there is not a single human being that can produce the signs which were to follow believers!

"And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Mark xvi. 17, 18.

Now, where, in this age of the world, shall we look for believers, according to this test? Who can produce the signs? Where is the Christian believer who can cast out devils; or can speak with new tongues; or play with the fangs of the serpent and not be bitten; or drink the poisonous draught and not be injured? Where is the believer now who can heal the sick, restore sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf? "These signs shall follow them that believe. They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." As believers in Christ cannot now produce the signs here indicated, we conclude that the subject cannot have a universal application. From the signs which were to follow believers, it is evident that the text had special reference to the disciples of our Lord, who were commissioned to preach the gospel of his kingdom, and establish the truths connected with his dispensation of grace.

As the apostles alone could exhibit the signs here designated, the subject had exclusive reference to the apostolic age. Jesus selected a few disciples to be his companions and co-laborers, to participate in the enjoyments of his religion, and share the perils of his mission. They had toiled together, endured the scorn of the proud and haughty Pharisee, and the buffetings and contumely of the world. He had imparted instruction concerning the principles of his kingdom, though they did not fully comprehend the character of his religion, nor the nature and extent of his mission.

Jesus had spoken of the direful judgments and severe national calamities which were soon to come upon that disobedient and sinful people, which would sweep them down to destruction. He had told them of his crucifixion, and that he would rise again from the dead; but his disciples did not fully appreciate the nature of his work; and when he was seized by his enemies and put to death, they gave up in despair. They had no expectation of meeting their Lord and Master again! Heavy of heart and full of sorrow, the disciples were convened together to bemoan their fate, and weep together that their Master had been taken from them, and with wicked hands had been crucified and slain. While in this dejected state of mind, hope having expired in their bosoms, the tidings came to them that Jesus had risen, but the information seemed to them improbable, and the histo-

rian tells us that they "mourned and wept and believed not."

Those disciples were unbelieving, and Jesus appeared unto them, the context informs us, as they sat at meat, and upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them that had seen him, after he had risen. The disciples were here called unbelievers — they believed not for joy. But the evidence was overwhelming that their Master had risen from the dead; and there they were commissioned to go forth and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth — or, those of you who believe in me as a true Teacher sent from God, shall be saved, and those who believe not shall be damned, or condemned. The Greek word (*katakrino*) which is here rendered *damned*, occurs in several other passages, though it is translated "damned" in but one other text — Romans xiv. 23. "He that doubteth is damned." It is rendered *condemn*, and *condemned*, and *condemneth*. When a man doubts, he is damned; or in a state of condemnation.

Macknight in this passage renders the original, "condemned." Dr. Campbell, another orthodox divine, says that the original word rendered "damned" corresponds exactly to the English verb "condemn." The same word occurs in Matt. xx. 18, and is applied to Christ: "They shall condemn him to death." No one supposes that this refers to misery in the future world, and yet it is

the same word as occurs in the text and is rendered "damned." It occurs again in Matt. xxvii. 3: "Then Judas, who had betrayed him (Jesus) when he saw that he was condemned (*katakrino*) repented himself," etc. It is found also in John viii. 10, where Jesus said to the guilty woman: "Hath no man condemned (*katakrino*) thee?—neither do I condemn thee." "They all condemned (*katakrino*) him (Christ) to be guilty of death." Mark xiv. 64.

No one supposes that these passages allude to misery in the immortal world. Neither does the text refer to the immortal condition of man. The risen Lord commissioned his apostles to preach the gospel, or good news, that he had risen from the dead, and was conqueror of hell and of death. Those thus sent out were endowed with miraculous powers—certain signs should follow them. The succeeding context informs us, that they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. (Mark xvi. 20).

The disciples went forth proclaiming the gospel, or good news, that their Lord had risen from the dead; that he was conqueror of hell and of death, and was alive again forevermore. They were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and gave evidence of their divine commission by the signs following them. For a specific purpose, miraculous powers were given unto them, so that the sick were restored, the blind made to see, the lame to

walk, the insane clothed in their right minds, and hope was kindled in the hearts of those who were filled with despair.

Those believing disciples were saved from moral darkness and blindness of mind, from erroneous views of the character and government of God; from the fear which has torment, and from the impending judgments which came upon that sinful people, who turned from the divine instructions of Jesus, and cruelly put him to death. In believing on Christ, they entered into rest, and had joy that was unspeakable and full of glory. The text had special application to the disciples of our Lord. We have already seen how full of doubt they were, when their Master was crucified, and that Jesus had occasion to reprove them for their unbelief, and upbraid them for their hardness of heart. But on being convinced of the resurrection of Jesus, they went forth on their divine mission, proclaiming the truth, the Lord confirming the word with signs following. They could produce the signs which were to follow those who believed. This passage, therefore, had special reference to the primitive Christians, who could produce the "signs" specified in the context, which were to follow believers. The text evidently was originally designed to be restricted in its application to those early Christians who were endowed with miraculous power, and, therefore, we cannot give to it a general or universal application.

EVERLASTING CONTEMPT.

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."—DANIEL xii. 2.

As many have erroneously supposed that this passage refers to the immortal condition of the whole human race, and describes the future happiness and misery of different classes of individuals, after the resurrection of all mankind from the dead, we ask the careful attention of the reader to the considerations we are about to present.

First, such an interpretation of this text is assumed to be correct, as the passage itself furnishes no proof of its correctness. Not the least hint is given of the immortal state of existence. No allusion is made to the resurrection of man from the dead. The passage does not assert that many shall "awake" in the future world; this is taken for granted. The very thing is assumed which needs undoubted proof! If the passage is to be understood literally, we may as well assume that those who awake from the dust of the earth, will awake into this world as into the future state. In absence of all proof, we certainly have no right to assume

hat the text refers to the immortal, resurrection vorld.

Again: it is supposed that the text refers to :he time when the whole human race will be raised 'rom the dead, and to a day of general judgment ıfter that event; and yet orthodoxy teaches that :he condition of every soul is unalterably fixed at leath, and that all men are either in a state of happiness or misery! If all have a conscious existence in heaven or hell immediately after death, as orthodoxy teaches, in what sense do all sleep in the dust of the earth? All are to awake from the dust of the earth and come forth to judgment, to rise either to everlasting life or everlasting shame and contempt, and yet it is earnestly contended that all are in a state of happiness or misery at death! Orthodoxy teaches that long *before* the judgment day, the righteous are enjoying everlasting life, and the wicked suffering everlasting shame and contempt, and yet, at that day, they will awake from the dust of the earth and come to judgment, when long before they have been *judged*, acquitted or condemned, according to their merits or demerits.

These considerations show the fallacy of the common interpretation of the passage before us; and we therefore seek an exposition of the text which will be more rational and scriptural.

We shall be essentially assisted in our investigation of the subject before us, by ascertaining the ancient mode of speech, and the meaning of pecu-

liar expressions employed by the ancients to convey important truths. When people were in a low and humble condition, they were spoken of as being bowed in the dust, and dwelling in the dust. These expressions were employed to represent a state of subjection, degradation, and humiliation.

Cruden says that "dust" signifies not simply grave and death, but "a most low and miserable condition." God raised up the poor out of the dust. (1 Samuel ii. 8.) Thy nobles shall dwell in the dust. (Nahum iii. 18.) "*They shall be reduced to a mean condition.*"

Speaking of Solomon, David says that "his enemies shall lick the dust." Psalms. lxxii. 9. The meaning of this is, as Dr. Clarke says, that his enemies shall become so completely subdued, that they shall be reduced to the most abject state of vassalage; hence, they were said to lick the dust.

Again we read:

"'For He bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, He layeth it low; He layeth it low, even to the ground; He bringeth it even to the dust.' Isa. xxvi. 5. This being brought 'to the dust,' was a figurative expression to denote a low and abject condition. Hence, when Job wanted to humble himself, he speaks of himself as repenting 'in dust and ashes.' Job xlii. 6. So by a figure of speech, by repentance, he would rise from the dust; that is, be delivered from that distressed and humble condition. When the divine judgments came upon Ariel, or Jerusalem, that city is represented as being low in the dust. 'And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak *out of the*

ground, and thy speech shall be *low out of the dust.*'" Isa. xxix. 4.

We thus see that a low and abject condition was spoken of by representing people to be "in the dust;" so, on the other hand, a deliverance from that condition was spoken of as rising from the dust, and shaking thyself from the dust, and even awaking from the dust. "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust." Isa. xxvi. 19. Those who had been brought down to the dust, (see verse 5th of this chapter,) were commanded to "awake" and sing; that is, they were to awake out of the dust. Jerusalem was exhorted to *awake* from the dust, thus:

"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem," etc. Isa. lii. 1, 2.

Here Jerusalem is exhorted to *awake* and *arise*, and shake herself from the dust! The people were to be raised from an humble and degraded condition to a state of prosperity. Hence, God is said to raise the poor "out of the dust;" (Psalms cxiii. 7); that is, from an abject condition to a state of happiness, to the enjoyment of favors and privileges of which they had been deprived. Dr. Clarke says, that "He may allude to the wretched state of the captives in Babylon, whom God raised up out of that dust and dunghill." See also 1 Samuel ii. 8; 1 Kings xvi. 2.

To be in the "dust of the earth" was to be in a low and degraded condition, and to rise from it, was to be in a state of prosperity. But the passage under consideration speaks of *sleeping in the dust of the earth.* Every reader of the Bible is aware that the term "sleep" is used in different senses in the Scriptures. It is conceded by all that it is used to represent the extinction of animal life — a state we call death. (John ix. 12, 13; 1 Cor. xv. 51.) It is also employed to represent a state of slothfulness and poverty. (See Proverbs vi. 9–11; xxiv. 33, 34.) It is also employed to set forth a state of moral and spiritual death. (Isa. xxix. 10; 1 Tim. v. 6; Rev. iii. 1.) We learn by these passages that people were represented as being dead and asleep while in this state of existence. They were morally dead and spiritually asleep; hence, when they were delivered from this state, they were spoken of as rising from the dead and awaking out of sleep, and even out of the *dust* of the earth. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and *arise from the dead*, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. v. 14. Those here referred to, and called upon to awake from sleep, were in a state of moral and spiritual death — and to arise from the dead, here, was the same as to awake from the dust of the earth. Such were exhorted to "awake to righteousness and sin not." 1 Cor. xv. 34.

Reference is made in the text to the Jewish people. They had once enjoyed great privileges and favors as the chosen people of God. They had

ı a powerful nation, and exerted a commanding ıence among the nations of the earth. But r. became a proud, haughty, and disobedient ple, and were ultimately brought into a low and raded condition; lost their national power and ıence, and experienced the retributive justice of l. The text under consideration, alluded to the ɜ when severe national judgments would come n the Jewish nation, and some would awake to ıppreciation of the truth and believe on Christ, acknowledge him before men, while others ıld secretly believe on him but publicly deny , and such would awake to shame and everlast- contempt.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the h shall awake." Many who were in a low and raded condition should be aroused from their argy—"some to everlasting life;" that is, to appreciation of the truth, and the Savior's ns, and would believe on him and *have* ever- ng life—while others would secretly accept , but not having sufficient moral courage to w their convictions, would awake to "shame everlasting contempt." Those who boldly essed Christ as their Lord and Master, awoke everlasting life," while those who were con- ed in their own souls that he was a true cher sent from God, but were too timid to e a public avowal of their convictions, and thus tically gave their influence against him "awoke hame and everlasting contempt." We read

that "among the chief rulers, also, MANY believed on him, but because of the Pharisees *they did not confess him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." John xii. 42, 43.

Here we are distinctly informed that many among even the chief rulers, believed on Christ, were convinced in their souls that he was divinely commissioned, but locked up their convictions in the secret chambers of their hearts, and dare not make a profession of their faith, through fear of the opposition and persecution which they would encounter. "Many" thus awoke from their slumber, in the dust of the earth, to shame and contempt! They were ashamed to be true to the honest convictions of their souls, ashamed to own Christ before men; ashamed to acknowledge him as their Master, and he was ashamed to own such as his disciples. (See Mark viii. 38; Luke xii. 8, 9.) "Many" believed on Christ, but were ashamed to own him publicly. Such "awoke" to an appreciation of the truth, but *awoke to shame and everlasting contempt.* Their conduct merited the shame and contempt that were visited upon them. Those who were true to their convictions, and publicly espoused their faith in Christ, in face of persecution and danger, awoke to everlasting life, and were "not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," for they were animated with a hope that maketh not ashamed. "Some shall awake to everlasting shame and contempt." Some believed on him, but could

not endure persecution, and turned back again to the enemy, and suffered in the divine judgments which came upon the ungodly, and when they awoke to the realizing sense of their condition, and cried, "Lord, Lord, open unto us," it was then too late to escape the punishment they deserved, and they awoke to shame and everlasting contempt. They had known the truth, had secretly believed on Christ, but had been ashamed to own him before men, and now they must suffer the divine judgment "in that time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." Dan. xii. 1. Or, as Matthew has it, "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world, to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Matt. xxiv. 21. This was the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel, the prophet. (Matt. xxiv. 15: Dan. xii. 1–11.) And all things spoken of were to be fulfilled in that generation. (Matt. xxiv. 34.) Those who believed in Christ and confessed him before men, were in possession of everlasting life, while those who believed in him, but stifled their convictions, and denied him before men, and joined hands with his enemies, awoke to shame and everlasting contempt! They had been ashamed to confess him publicly, and they awoke to realize the shame and contempt they merited and experienced!

THE STRAIT GATE.

"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because, strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—MATTHEW vii. 13, 14.

It is believed that all men, being born totally depraved, with corrupt natures, are in the broad road to destruction, which leads to endless pain and wretchedness, and that millions on millions of God's intelligent offspring will be endlessly destroyed. They will suffer, as Dr. Watts expresses it, amidst

> **"Eternal plagues and heavy chains,**
> **Tormenting racks and fiery coals."**

But such opinions are opposed to the teachings of nature and revelation, and we dismiss them as unworthy of our regard.

What then is meant, we pass now to inquire, by "Entering into the strait gate?" The context shows that Jesus had reference to those moral obligations and duties, which grow out of our relation to kindred humanity and which are enjoined upon us, because of our relationship to each other. God being the common Father of all, consequently

we are members of one great family, hence, there are relative duties growing out of this relationship, the discharge of which, constitutes us characteristically, children of God, and true and faithful disciples of his Son. Jesus was imparting that moral instruction designed to enlighten man in regard to his duties and obligations, both towards God and kindred humanity. He would send him to search his own heart and detect the passions lurking there; enter into a thorough examination of himself, and not overlook his own imperfections and wrongs, in searching for the sins of others.

As the moral obligations and duties thus imposed upon man were so numerous, instead of individual specifications, Jesus sums them up in the following broad and comprehensive language: "Therefore, ALL things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." And then he adds immediately: "Enter ye in at *the* strait gate," or, enter ye in at *this* strait gate of doing to others, as ye would that they should do unto you. By the "strait gate," and "narrow way which leadeth unto life," we understand that reference is made to that course of moral excellence and christian principle, and integrity, which the gospel recognizes, and which leadeth unto life. Such, animated by a divine spirit, are spoken of as being in the "kingdom of God," which consists in "righteousness, peace and joy in the holy spirit." Such were in possession of "everlasting life."

It was only by complying with the requisitions of Christ, and doing to others as he would be done by, that man could become a Christian and enter into life. And as few only, made practical the Savior's teachings, hence, it was said, "few there be that find it." As the masses were governed by opposite principles, which lead to retaliation and revenge, it was appropriately said: "Broad is the way which leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." Those who were regardless of moral principles, were in the broad road to destruction. They were in the way of sin and death, while those who gave heed to the Savior's teachings were in the narrow way of life and peace.

The Psalmist says: "Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will praise the Lord. This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter." When a man begins to live the christian life, then he enters the gate of righteousness; and through this gate of righteousness, or right doing, does he enter into the kingdom of God, which consists in righteousness, peace and joy in the holy spirit. And so small was the number comparatively, who entered the gate of righteousness, by doing as they would be done by, that it was said, "few there be that find it." He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction. Those who gave heed to the instructions of Jesus were in the way of life—they were in possession of everlasting life. Christ said: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," and those who

kept his words were in the way of life, for "he that hath the Son, hath life."

"Broad is the way which leadeth to destruction." This language has no reference to the future immortal world, but refers simply to the destructive power of sin in this life. He who is in the way of sin is in the way of destruction. Paul, speaking of the Jew and Gentile, says, "they have all gone out of the way.....Destruction and misery are in their ways." And so destruction and misery are in the way of every sinner. The way of the transgressor is hard, we should therefore flee from sin and walk in the way which leadeth unto life, and shineth more and more, even unto the perfect day. All are called away from the broad road of sin and destruction. Sin mars the moral image of God, and is destructive to man's peace and happiness, we should therefore flee from it as from a pestilence.

What we need is simply to make Christianity practical, to enter this strait gate, and walk in this narrow way of doing to others in all things, as we would that they should do unto us. Then shall we be in the way of life, of peace and salvation.

THE CASE OF JUDAS.

"The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him; but wo unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed; it had been good for that man if he had not been born."—MATTHEW XXVI. 24.

These words are supposed, by many professed religionists, to teach the endless perdition of Judas. How could it have been said of Judas, it is asked, "It had been good for that man if he had not been born, if he is finally to be saved? If he is to reach heaven at last, it certainly was good for him to have been born."

Many erroneous ideas have arisen in regard to the meaning of this passage, by supposing that it had reference to the condition of Judas in the immortal state of existence. But this language had not the least reference to his final condition. It was a common proverb among the Jews in our Savior's day, to indicate any severe calamity to befall an individual, without any reference to the future world. When any fearful calamity or judgment was to come upon an individual, it was common to say, "It were good for that man if he had not been born." It was a proverbial expression,

or an expression in common use among the Jews, to denote any severe chastisement or great misfortune, or terrible calamity. The Savior, knowing its use, and aware of the fate of Judas, very appropriately applied it to him. Similar expressions had long been in use. Job cursed the day of his birth, and said: "Let the day perish wherein I was born." Job iii. 3. Solomon said: "If a man live many years, and his soul be not filled with good; and also that he hath no burial: I say that an untimely birth is better than he." Eccles. vi. 3. This is the same as saying, "It had been better if he had not been born." It was a common poverb to denote any great misfortune coming upon an individual; and as Judas would be overwhelmed with sorrow and smitten with grief and anguish, and plunged into the greatest distress by a vivid sense of his sins, it was very properly applied to him without any reference to his immortal condition.

Kenrick says, in his exposition, the expression—

"'It had been good for him, if he had never been born,' is a *proverbial* phrase, and not to be understood literally; for it is not consistent with our ideas of the divine goodness to make the existence of any being a curse to him, or to cause him to suffer more, upon the whole, than he enjoys happiness. Rather than do this, God would not have created him at all. But as it is usual to say of men who are to endure some grievous punishment or dreadful calamity, that it would have been better for them never to have been born, Christ

foreseeing what Judas would bring upon himself, by delivering up his Master into the hands of his enemies, applies this language to him."

We call the reader's attention to the following from Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, upon this subject. He enters into a labored argument to show that Judas may be saved, and that his repentance was sincere, genuine, and acceptable to God. After mature deliberation, he thinks that "there is no positive proof of the final damnation of Judas in the sacred text." This is the opinion of one of the most learned and distinguished divines of the orthodox church. Dr. Clarke shows clearly, that the language that stands at the head of this article, was a proverbial expression to denote the state of any flagrant transgressor without regard to the future world. But we will let this distinguished commentator speak for himself. He says:

"Judas was indisputably a bad man; but he might have been worse; we may plainly see that there were depths of wickedness to which he might have proceeded, and which were prevented by his repentance. Thus things appear to stand previously to his end. But is there any room for hope in his death? In answer to this it must be understood—first: That there is presumptive evidence that he did not destroy himself; and, second: That his repentance was sincere. If so, was it not possible for the mercy of God to extend even to his case? It did so to the murderers of the Son of God; and they certainly were worse men, (strange as this assertion may appear,) than Judas. Even

he gave them the fullest proof of Christ's innocence; they buying the field with the money Judas threw down, was the full proof of it; and yet, with every convincing evidence before them, they crucified our Lord. They excited Judas to betray his Master, and crucified him when they got him into their power, and therefore St. Stephen calls them both the betrayers and murderers of the Just One, (Acts vii. 52); in these respects they were more deeply criminal than Judas himself; yet, even to these very betrayers and murderers, Peter preaches repentance, with the promise of remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Acts iii. 12–26.) If, then, these were within the reach of mercy, and we are informed that a great company of the priests became obedient to the faith, (Acts vi. 7,) then certainly Judas was not in such a state as precluded the possibility of his salvation. Surely the blood of the covenant could wash out even his stain, as it did that more deeply ingrained one, of the other betrayers and murderers of the Lord Jesus.

Should the 25th verse be urged against this possibility, because it is there said that Judas fell from his ministry and apostleship, that he might go to his own place, and that this place is hell. I answer—first: It remains to be proved that this place means hell; and, second: It is not clear that the words are spoken of Judas at all, but of Matthias; his own place meaning that vacancy in the apostolate, to which he was then elected.

To say the repentance of Judas was merely the effect of his horror; that it did not spring from the compunction of heart; that it was legal and not evangelical, etc., is saying what none can with propriety say but God himself, who searches the heart. What renders his case most desperate, are the

words of our Lord. 'Wo unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born!' Matt. xxvi. 24. I have considered this saying in a general point of view, in my note on Matthew xxvi. 24, and were it not a proverbial form of speech among the Jews, to express the state of any flagrant transgressor, I should be led to apply it, in all its literal import, to the case of Judas, as I have done in the above note, in the case of any damned soul; but when I find that it was a proverbial saying, and that it has been used in many cases, where the fixing of the irreversible doom of a sinner is not implied, it may be capable of a more favorable interpretation than what is generally given to it. I shall produce a few of those examples from Schoettgen, to which I have referred in my note on Matthew xxvi. 24.

In Chagigah, fol. 2, 2, it is said, 'Whoever considers these four things, it would have been better for him had he never come into the world, viz.: That which is above; that which is below; that which is before; and that which is behind. And whosoever does not attend to the honor of his Creator, it were better for him had he never been born.'

In Shemoth Rabba, sect. 40, fol. 135, 1, 2, it is said, 'Whosoever knows the law, and does not do it, it had been better for him had he never come into the world.'

In Vayikra Rabba, sect. 26, fol. 179, 4, and Midrash Coheleth, fol. 91, 4, it is thus expressed: 'It were better for him had he never been created; and it would have been better for him had he been strangled in the womb, and never have seen the light of this world.'

In Sohar Genes, fol. 71, col. 282, it is said, 'If

any man be parsimonious towards the poor, it had been better for him had he never come into the world.' *Ibid*, fol. 84, col. 333. 'If any performs the law, not for the sake of the law, it were good for that man had he never been created.'

These examples sufficiently prove that this was a common proverb, and is used with a great variety and latitude of meaning; and seems intended to show that the case of such and such persons was not only very deplorable, but extremely dangerous; but does not imply the positive impossibility either of their repentance or salvation.

The utmost that can be said for the case of Judas is this: he committed a heinous act of sin and ingratitude; but he repented, and did what he could to undo his wicked act; he had committed the sin unto death, i. e., a sin that involves the death of the body; but who can say, (if mercy was offered to Christ's murderers, and the gospel was first to be preached at Jerusalem, that these very murderers might have the first offer of salvation through him whom they had pierced,) that the same mercy could not be extended to wretched Judas? I contend, that the chief priest, etc., who instigated Judas to deliver up his Master, and who crucified him — and who crucified him, too, as a malefactor, having at the same time, the most indubitable evidence of his innocence — were worse men than Judas Iscariot himself; and that if mercy was extended to those, the wretched, penitent traitor did not die out of the reach of the yearning of its bowels. And I contend farther, that there is no positive evidence of the final damnation of Judas in the sacred text."—*Clarke in loco.*

This learned commentator contends that the repentance of Judas was genuine, and that "there

is no positive evidence of the final damnation of Judas in the sacred text." Why, then, we are gravely asked, did he go and *hang* himself, as Matthew affirms? (Matt. xxvii. 5.) We would here state, that Luke gives a somewhat different account of his death. See Acts i. 18: "And falling headlong, he *burst asunder in the midst*, and all his bowels gushed out." How then, are we to reconcile this apparent discrepancy between the two evangelists? One affirms that he hanged himself, the other that he fell headlong and burst asunder. The difficulty in question arises from an incorrect translation of the Greek word *apegzato*, here rendered "hanged himself." It does not necessarily have this meaning, and may be rendered, "was suffocated, as with grief or anguish." Eminent critics, as Dr. Clarke says, believe that Judas was suffocated with excessive grief. "Wakefield (he adds,) supports this meaning of the word with great learning and ingenuity." Dr. George Campbell, an eminent Scotch Presbyterian divine, says that "the Greek word plainly denotes *strangling*," but does not say how, by hanging, or otherwise. It is quite a different term that is used in those places where hanging is mentioned. He also adds, that it may be rendered, "was suffocated." Wakefield renders it, "was choked with anguish." This rendering of the original is supported by high authority, and is evidently correct. Judas gave every evidence possible of deep sorrow for sin, and of genuine repentance.

THE CASE OF THE MURDERER.

"Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."—1 JOHN iii. 15.

Where does a man who commits murder, and is immediately killed himself, received his punishment? Where is the specific promise of his salvation? Is there any scriptural evidence that those dying in sin, in drunkenness, or with murder in their hearts, can be saved? As these queries are often propounded to us, we propose to give them a candid and thorough examination. The sacrificial theology teaches that those dying in sin, are eternally wretched. The Bible, however, does not sustain such a conclusion.

§ I. *The punishment of the murderer.*

That the subject may be thoroughly elucidated and understood, we will consider first the nature of the punishment of the man who commits murder and is immediately killed himself.

In this connection, we would call the attention of the reader to the teachings of revelation in regard to the *certainty* of punishment. The Scriptures are very explicit upon this point, assuring us

that God "will by no means clear the guilty." Ex. xxxiv. 7. "He that doeth wrong, *shall receive* for the wrong that he hath done; and there is no respect of persons." Col. iii. 25. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." Prov. xi. 21. Such is the divine testimony in regard to the certainty of punishment. Man cannot sin with impunity. He cannot transgress the law of God and escape merited retribution, for God will by *no means* clear the guilty. The voice of revelation upon this point is in perfect harmony with the experience of the transgressor; for there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. (Isa. lvii. 20, 21.) "The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days." Job xv. 20. The theology of the sacrificial church denies this doctrine, and affirms that a man can sin and escape all punishment. It teaches the forgiveness of punishment, and that God remits the penalty due transgression, towards all who are saved. Those who repent and are forgiven do not suffer the just demerit of sin. They *escape* punishment; hence, if a man murders and repents sincerely immediately after the commission of the deed, and soon dies, he escapes all punishment, and is rewarded with heaven for his repentance. Under these circumstances, according to the teachings of orthodoxy, the murderer is not punished at all for his sin. And if we should ask, where does the repentant murderer get his punishment, according to the sacrificial theology, which teaches the remission of the *penalty*, the reply

would be—"Nowhere; God forgives the punishment." But this sentiment contradicts the teachings of revelation upon this point, as we have already seen. Man must be punished all he *deserves*, and if he does not receive a merited retribution in this life, he must in the next, for God will by no means clear the guilty.

But there is no possible way for any imperfect, human being to determine precisely how much punishment a man deserves. God only, who knoweth the heart, can determine this. To know how much punishment a sinner merits, we must first determine precisely how *guilty* he is, and this no mortal man can know. We have no scale to measure human guilt; no line and plummet with which we can sound the depths of the human heart, and consequently cannot determine the exact moral condition of any soul, and hence we cannot know how much punishment a man actually deserves. No mortal can tell how much a guilty man suffers in this world. He will suffer as long as he remains impenitent and guilty; but when he repents and is brought to the knowledge of the truth, and his sins are forgiven, then he is no longer a subject of retributive justice. All men shall be brought to repentance and to the knowledge of God, so that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 10, 11).

With this view of the subject, let us consider the case of the murderer. A man may take the life

of another, without committing murder. A good man may accidentally kill another man, and, of course, he commits no sin, and is not held amenable for the deed. We call the reader's attention to this point to show that the sin consists *in the intention*, and that a man commits murder in his heart, really in the sight of God who premeditates it, and *intends* it, though even he may be foiled in his purpose, and does not commit the overt act. Murders are generally committed in moments of passionate excitement, when a man is not himself, but when he is beside himself, or infatuated, or partially insane, and these inciting causes are taken into consideration when a man is on trial for murder, as extenuating circumstances, and frequently such are convicted of murder in the second degree, or manslaughter. But no human being can determine precisely how guilty such a man is, and how much punishment he actually deserves. God only can know this. Such men must be judged by the circumstances which have surrounded them, their early moral training, parental example, the neglect of moral and religious culture. To judge men correctly, we must take all these things into consideration. We often judge sinners too harshly. Children born and reared at the "Five Points," surrounded by bad influences, no good instruction at home, brought up in ignorance and sin, all seething together in their filth and shame, must be judged according to their position and circumstances. They are brought up in sin, and their

natures are perverted, but they are not as guilty before God, as those who have been better circumstanced and conditioned. They deserve to be punished according to their *moral sense* of right and wrong. Their *guilt* is guaged according to their measure of moral sense, and the punishment is in proportion to the measure of guilt, which comes through remorse of conscience — mental suffering. The punishment inflicted upon individual transgression, corresponds to the law violated. If a physical law is violated, physical suffering follows; if a moral law is broken, mental suffering follows. When a man thus morally conditioned commits murder, he experiences mental suffering, and remorse from the moment he contemplates the dark deed, just in proportion to this moral sense which measures and determines his guilt. But we will suppose that another man better conditioned commits murder. He is a man of culture and correct appreciation of moral obligations. Suppose in the commission of murder, he is killed himself; or, in accordance with a prior intention, after the dark and bloody deed, he commits suicide. Where does such a man receive his punishment?

We take this extreme case, to express our views frankly and plainly upon the point before us. Such a man acts in this case from motives which have their origin in the appetites and passions of his nature, in opposition to the higher faculties of the soul, and his moral sense which remonstrates against the deed, and pleads with him to desist,

and which burdens him with guilt and pain and remorse. As soon as he yields to temptation, the sensual nature is warring against the higher spiritual nature of man, and often brings him into captivity to the law of sin and death. (Romans vii. 20–23.) There is a continual conflict between the sensual and spiritual nature of man. Temptation comes through the sensual nature, though the actual sin consists in the higher nature yielding to the temptation, and permitting itself to be perverted by the evil suggestions of the lower nature. With the higher nature there is a constitutional rectitude of goodness and purity. Through the moral sense, man is led towards God. That stands in everlasting hostility to wrong; and hence, when a man takes a sin into his bosom, and folds it there, he takes it at his peril—his conscience arouses at once and remonstrates against it, and there is an irrepressible conflict in his soul. His peace of mind is disturbed, he feels guilty before God, the fiends of remorse torment him by day and by night, and he cries out with Cain, the murderer, "my punishment is greater than I can bear." From the moment the dark deed is contemplated, there is an overpowering sense of guilt which plunges the man into hell; for, as Dr. Clarke says, the sinner has a hell in his own bosom, and that sin constitutes hell. From the moment the murderous thought finds a lodgment in the heart, the man feels guilty before God, and his conscience smites him as with a rod, and an awakened sense

of his sin increases his remorse and shame, and he smarts and writhes under it, as did the first murderer. This is his punishment in the sight of God, for the violation of his moral law, in which we now view the subject. The punishment consists in the mental suffering, the keen remorse, the biting sorrow, the anguish of soul, the loss of self-respect, the sinner experiences from the time the murder is designed till he repents of the deed. REMORSE OF CONSCIENCE is the punishment. Indeed, we are told now that the suffering of the "finally impenitent" in the future world, will consist in *remorse of conscience* only. This is taught by the sacrificial theology of the church at the present time. The sinner suffers continually. "There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God." They are like the troubled sea which cannot rest. John Randolph, who was not a sinner above all men, cried out on his dying bed, "*Remorse, Remorse.*" He desired that the word might be written upon a card, that he might see it. And when he looked upon it, again and again did he repeat the word, "*Remorse, Remorse.*" Remorse of conscience is a fearful retribution for sin, and no man with an awakened moral sense can escape it.

The distinguished Dr. Chalmers speaks as follows in regard to the retributions of conscience:

"In the peace and enjoyment of the good affections there is a very present reward, and in the disquietude and agony of the evil affections there is a very present vengeance.....If men should cease

to be wicked, all wretchedness and woe would in a great measure be banished from society; and if the character of heaven were re-established upon earth, the blessedness of heaven would be forthwith realized."—*Institutes of Theol. i.* 104, 128.

To the same point testifies Dr. Wayland respecting the awards of conscience:

"We can never be disunited from it. It goes with us through all the scenes of life, in company and alone, admonishing, warning, reproving, and recording; and, as a source of happiness or of misery, it must abide with us forever.....Conscience forewarns us against crime, and inflicts its own peculiar punishment upon guilt."—*Moral Science*, pp. 83, 103, 427.

We give the following upon this point from an orthodox journal[1] of high rank:

"The principle of conscience establishes also the inflexible *justice* of God. It has its awards and punishments. It visits the evil-doer with the terrible stings of guilt and remorse, and throws over him the deep chill shadow of a coming retribution. It dashes into every cup of forbidden pleasure, the unfailing, inseparable element of consequent wretchedness. It links together human crime and human suffering, the vices and miseries of men, so that the one shall follow the other invariably, as sound and echo pursue each other along the mountain side. There is with it no respect of persons, no taking of bribes. With its whip of scorpions it pursues the wrong-doer, whoever he may be, wherever he may go; tracks him into every obscurity, finds him out in the deepest retirement and

[1] *Bibliotheca Sacra*, November, 1849.

the darkest night; overtakes him in his swiftest escape, and, like the terrible avenger, pursues and hangs over him wherever he takes his way."

The heart of the sinner heaves with agonized emotions; and those heavy throes of grief and sorrow, which trouble him by day and night, tell him in language that cannot be misunderstood, that God will by no means clear the guilty, and that the wicked shall not be unpunished.

This is no wild vagary of the imagination. Could you, reader, look into the aching bosom of the transgressor, you would find that the pains of hell were there, and great trouble and sorrow. His soul is pierced with agony as with arrows. There is a hell on earth, in every sinner's breast, that is to be feared above all others. We need not look into the soul of the rebellious child of God to see the fires of hell raging there. The sinner writhes beneath a guilty conscience—he has no peace, for he trembles with fear as he goes forth to mingle with the world by day, and no sweet joy comes to his soul as he reposes upon his couch at night.

Should it be said that the conscience becomes deadened by constant transgression, that the sinner suffers no painful emotions; we would reply first, that this can never be shown, and in absence of positive proof to substantiate it, we must accept the declaration of the Scriptures, that the *way* of the transgressor *is hard*, and that there is no peace to the wicked. And secondly, if the moral sense, *conscience* has become deadened, and destroyed,

then man is relieved from all responsibility and accountability, and is not a subject of rewards and punishments. If a man, by vicious habits, loses his reason, and becomes idiotic or insane, he is no longer regarded as a responsible man, or an accountable agent. And whatever he may do, he is not properly a subject for retribution. And if a man has lost his moral sense, so that he is actually deficient in conscience, then he is not responsible, and merits no punishment. When his conscience is destroyed, his accountability is destroyed. Just in proportion as we admit the existence of conscience, we admit the positive retribution which must come through conscious guilt and consequent *remorse.*

§ II. *How is the murderer saved?*

Having seen how the murderer is punished, we pass now to consider the scriptural evidence of the salvation of those dying in sin. "Where," we are frequently asked, "is the promise of the salvation of the murderer?" We answer, that we find it in the broad, comprehensive language of the inspired penman, which embraces a world-wide humanity, which teaches the salvation of *all* sinners. The sacred writers did not single out specific cases or particular classes of sinners, but embraced them all in the work and mission of Christ. We might ask in turn, where do the Scriptures teach that Christ died for drunkards and murderers, and those who commit suicide? The reply would be, that there are no particular passages which teach that he died specially for that class of sinners, but the broad

statement is made that he *died for all.* (2 Cor. v. 14; Heb. ii. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 6.) We should be told that as Christ died for ALL — tasted death for EVERY MAN, therefore he died for all classes of sinners — even drunkards and murderers. Precisely by the same mode of reasoning, we show that all classes of sinners are embraced in the Savior's mission, and all will be redeemed from sin, inasmuch as Christ is called the Savior of the WORLD, and of ALL MEN. If he is the Savior of all men, then he is the Savior of all classes of sinners.

Suppose again, we ask the objector, where do the Scriptures say that Christ *offers* salvation to the drunkard and murderer? He will reply by saying that there are no specific passages in the Bible, where these two classes of sinners are singled out, as having salvation offered to them, but salvation is free to all, and all are offered it, therefore, these are embraced in the offer. So we say in regard to their salvation. They are not singled out from the rest of sinners as being saved, but are embraced in the comprehensive language, that God is the Savior of all men.

In this way only can we prove from the Scriptures that God is *good* to such vile men. There is no specific passage which affirms that He is, — only the broad declaration that He is *good unto all.* (Psalms cxlv. 9.) Of course, He can be good unto ALL, only by being good unto *each.* Where, we might ask, is it asserted in the Scriptures, that God is the Father, or even the Creator, of the drunkard

and murderer? No such specific scripture can be found—only the comprehensive language that God is the Creator and Father of all mankind. "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" Mal. ii. 10.

So we say, there is no specific declaration, that God will save those to whom He refers, any more than that He will save others. They are embraced in the number for whom Christ died, because he died for ALL; they are embraced in the number to be saved, or delivered from sin, because God will have *all men* to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. ii. 4.) In proving that God is the Creator of all men, we at the same time prove that He is the Creator of *each man*, though never so vile and sinful. In proving the universal paternity of God, we, at the same time prove, that He is the Father of each man; so in proving that God is the Savior of all men, we prove that He is the Savior of each man.

Christ is called the Savior of the WORLD. "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." John i. 29. "This is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." John iv. 42. 1 John iv. 14. Again: "And I, if I be lifted up from earth, will draw all men unto me." John xii. 32. Could language be more comprehensive? If Christ draws ALL men unto him, as he here declares, he will draw *each* soul unto him. He cannot draw all without drawing each. The less is contained in the greater. All who are not brought to the

knowledge of God in this life, must be in the life to come, else the Scriptures falsify, for they positively assert that God *will* have ALL MEN to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. Those who do not bow the knee to Christ here, must hereafter, because *every* knee shall bow, and *every* tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father. (Phil. ii. 10, 11; Rom. v. 16; Eph. i. 9, 10; 1 Cor. xv. 22).

We have not space to quote the numerous passages that prove the salvation of all men. We admit that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. But when the wicked, murderous spirit is cast out of a man, and he is brought to the knowledge of the truth, and knows God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, then he has eternal life abiding in him. Drunkards and murderers repent of their sins, and then have eternal life. This is what Paul teaches: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor DRUNKARDS, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Now what does Paul say? Does he affirm that they cannot repent and enter the kingdom of God, which is a kingdom of righteousness and peace? By no means; for he immediately adds—addressing his Christian brethren: "And such WERE SOME OF YOU; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the

name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." 1 Cor. vi. 9–11. Paul here teaches that some of his Christian brethren were once among the vile classes he specifies, who could not inherit the kingdom of God; but turning from the error of their ways by being brought to the knowledge of the truth, they then entered the kingdom of righteousness and peace. Paul simply taught that while they remained in sin, they were out of the kingdom, but when they had abandoned their evil ways, and walked in righteousness, they were *in the kingdom.* Heaven is a state and condition as well as a locality, and as far as a man is in a heavenly state of mind, he is in the kingdom of God—heavenly mindedness is the condition of entrance to this kingdom of truth, righteousness and peace.

As we speak now of the drunkard and murderer, we say that they can never enter the kingdom, *as such;* it precludes all sinners, but when they repent of their sins, they can find entrance to that kingdom. Hence we believe that Moses and David, who were murderers, entered the kingdom of God, though not as murderers, but as saints, having forsaken their sins. When asked, therefore, *how* sinners are saved, we reply, only by forsaking their sins and being brought to the knowledge of the truth, and when this work is not accomplished previous to the event, we call death, it must be subsequently. The mere event of death does not change our relations to God, and it is nowhere stated that all shall know God in this life,

The comprehensive declaration is, that Christ will draw all men unto him. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John xii. 32. The natural inference is, that those who are not drawn to him previous to their death, will be hereafter. Death is a dissolution of soul and body, or separation of the spiritual from the earthly nature. The firm is dissolved, the co-partnership which has existed between these two natures ceases, the spiritual nature is delivered from the earthly and sensual nature, and we apprehend, is better conditioned and circumstanced, than when connected with the sensual part of man, and more susceptible to divine and holy influences.

Will a man enter the future state a sinner, a drunkard and murderer? We think not, though it is evident to our mind that he enters that life imperfect, feeling the effects of sin, and with the consciousness of past errors, he will repent of his iniquity and seek pardon. We say, that he will not enter that state *as a sinner*, because he will not take along with him the sensual nature which prompts him to sin; and in the absence of *motive*, he will not sin. With the sensual nature, comes the appetite for strong drinks, or the motive to murder, to be revenged, or to obtain money, or some other passion. Without the *motive*, man will not sin, and without the sensual nature, there will be no motive, consequently when the spiritual nature becomes disconnected from the sensual, man will not sin; still he will be conscious of his past

wrongs, and will seek the pardoning grace of God. We base this argument on the essential rectitude and moral purity of man's spiritual nature.

God made man upright, and he is naturally good, and instead of being totally depraved, the natural element of that spiritual nature is goodness and purity, hence he finds happiness in the pursuit of goodness. A man who is prompted to commit murder, is led on by a *motive* which springs out of the sensual nature; now if he is struck down, in the act himself, and death ensues, he is delivered from the earthly or sensual nature, and consequently the motive is gone, and he has no longer any murderous desire, and standing in the presence of God, with all that is essentially spiritual about him, he will confess his sin and be pardoned.

In this connection, we desire to introduce the following, from one of the most distinguished orthodox divines[1] in America:

"When we pass from life we shall leave behind, not only the body, but all of that part of the passions and the appetites which has its function and sphere on account of our poor bodily condition. How much of what we call the mind shall be immortal, or how much of what we call the appetites and passions we shall carry with us in our changed form, I know not, and you know not. We know that when an engine is taken from the place where it has been used, it is not necessary to take the clamps, and screws, and bolts, and various appliances, which, though serviceable, were accidental

[1]H. W. Beecher, *Independent*, December 26, 1861.

to the condition of the engine. These may be left behind, and yet the engine may be kept in its entirety. And so there are many passions, many appetites, many lower faculties, that are indispensable to our physical conditions, which we can easily imagine will drop away from us when we pass out of this life, and yet leave the soul unimpaired. The reason, the affections, all the higher faculties, will go forth into immortality; but it will be no small thing to have left behind those things which belong to the body exclusively, and from which come largely the distemperature and trouble that afflict us in this life. If there may be a hope that in part we shall leave behind the appetites and passions, and that those which we carry with us shall no longer be turned downward, as here, to minister to evil, but shall be evermore turned upward as auxiliaries of the higher feelings, then the thought of departing, the thought of going forth, should not be one of loss, but one of essential gain.

'It doth not yet appear what we shall be;' but the representations of the Bible (and they agree with our highest reasonings,) make the life beyond not a mere elongation of this. Though it unfolds the same faculties that we have here, it is as much fuller and higher and nobler than our present life as the organized plant is superior to the simple seed. The conditions being changed as they are, it must needs be so. There is a strong tendency manifested among men at this time to make the other life an absolute and literal continuation of this. 'Just as a man goes out of this world, just so he begins in the other world,' they say.

If you take a seed that has ripened in Nova Zembla, and bring it into the tropics, and plant it, it will not be what it would have been in Nova Zembla, with a short growing season, and the scan-

tiest supply of food. It will have, with a long summer, and an abundant supply, a growth to which no one would suspect that it could attain, who had only seen it grow in the frigid zones. Many things that are shrubs in the frigid zones, are high, waving century oaks in the tropics. And so men in this life are in conditions which, though fitted to develop the earlier stages of human growth, are not fitted to develop the full estate of that idea which God has expressed in the creation of man. And we may hope that when we bid adieu to our mortal life, we shall leave behind some things which are necessary to the exigencies of our condition here, but which will not be necessary to our state there. Our imagination, our reason, our affections, and our moral sentiments, we shall doubtless carry with us; our identity will remain; and I suppose all our faculties will be substantially the same; but the conditions of our life will be so different that we shall be like men taken from poverty into abundance; from winter into summer; from a cold climate and a frozen soil, into a soil never locked by ice, and skies that never know frost. Our life there shall be ampler, fuller, nobler, than it is here."

We do not believe the future state is precisely like this, and that when a man dies, and goes into the future world, it is the same as passing from one room into another, as some represent it — that the future life is only a lengthening out of this life, neither do we think that the mere article of death has any redemptive power, or tends to bleach and purify the soul, but that it places man in a condition where he will not be exposed to the temptations of the flesh, and where redemptive influences

will affect him more powerfully than they now do. Death works no change in man's moral nature, as we understand it, but places him in better surroundings, or rather takes him away from bad influences, so that he is better circumstanced and conditioned in the future world than here, and being more susceptible to good influences, he will more readily be brought to the knowledge of God.

"It is certainly true that *death* has nothing to do with sin directly, yet the *body* has a great deal to do with it; and as death delivers the soul from the body, it sets it free from the temptations of the body. Suppose a man falls into the sea encumbered, not only with his ordinary clothes, but with thick, heavy over-garments, his feet encased in heavy boots, and his hands confined in stout gloves. By great exertion and struggle, he succeeds in throwing these off. The getting quit of these, does not, indeed, save him from drowning, but it certainly puts him in a better condition for reaching the shore. So death does not, itself, bestow purity, knowledge, and happiness on the soul, but it certainly puts it in a better condition for reaching these, by freeing it from all the clogs and hindrances of the flesh."

Sin, we regard as a perversion of man's nature, and not a development of it. Man is not naturally depraved, nor totally corrupt; but his moral nature is good, the sensual powers of his nature drag him downward, but this sensual nature, with its earthy passions and appetites which the apostle says, ever wars against the law of the spirit, does not accompany man into the future world; hence, he will

have no earthly, fleshly passions there, no desire for lust, for wealth, for strong drinks, hence no desire to plunder, rob, and murder—no motive to sin there. These temptations and motives to sin come through the passions of the sensual nature. Man's spiritual nature throbs with good aspirations and holy desires, and naturally gravitates towards God so that he is happy only when he is good. And take the spiritual nature out of its present surroundings, and disconnect it from the passions and appetites of the earthly nature, and it will ascend to a higher and purer atmosphere, as the balloon ascends when the weights are disconnected which hold it down to the earth. These sensual passions and appetites hold man down to the earth. Disconnect these two natures, and the spiritual ascends.

"I am persuaded that any one will feel convinced by the examination, that much of our goodness is due to the favorable circumstances and influences by which we have been surrounded by our birth; and that more wickedness than is generally supposed, is to be put down to hunger and nakedness and uncleanness, to bad air, and bad food and shelter, to ignorance and evil associations. The apostle rightly says, 'Evil communications corrupt good manners;' and it is equally true that good communications help to reform bad manners.

And can we estimate, then, too highly, the power for good over the soul which will be put in action by the new and wonderful circumstances in which it will be placed on its entrance into the spiritual world, by the mighty and divine influences brought to bear upon it? No longer seeing through a glass

darkly, as it did when veiled with the body, it there sees a spirit, face to face, and perceives the real character and true relations of things. And what sudden revelations of truth, of love and beauty, burst upon its anointed sight. The glory of God's majesty, the excellency of his wisdom, the extent of his goodness, the tenderness and the love of the Savior for man, the joy and spiritual beauty of the angels, the blessedness and ever-increasing knowledge of the redeemed, the boundless creation stretching out on all sides into the invisible, the countless starry worlds that lie like shining dust under the feet of God!

These, and a thousand other exhibitions of divine power and wisdom, and a thousand other revelations of the Savior's love and grace, and of the holiness and bliss of heaven, must, indeed, exert a mighty attractive influence on the new-born soul, lifting it upward. They will draw it toward the pure, the good, the beautiful, as the vapors of the earth and sea are drawn upward toward the sun, by the attraction of its genial light and warmth.

What force there is even here in truth, and purity, and love. How reverent they will make us, how gentle and yielding, when exerting their full power upon us. How strongly we are drawn toward a really good man, even in this life, while surrounded by all manner of evil influences, and perverted, darkened and hindered by our sinfulness. Oh, how much more, then, when the darkness and blindness which the fleshly veil puts upon our sight, are passed away; when, set free from the perverting and corrupting influences of the body, we become spirit only, beholding the infinite goodness of God!"[1]

[1]Rev. T. B. Thayer.

The passions which come through the desires and lusts of the flesh, lead man into sin. Among the things which Paul enumerates as the "works of the flesh," are "adultery, murders, drunkenness," etc. (Gal. v. 19–21.) These sins, as we understand the apostle to teach, come through the desires of the sensual nature, which becomes disconnected from the spiritual nature when man enters the future world. All men, we think, go into the future state imperfect and undeveloped, but not with sinful motives and passions and desires and lusts. The murderer may be killed while he commits murder, but not taking along with him the *passion* and *motive* which prompted him to the deed, he will not enter upon the future life with murder in his soul, but conscious of his sin, he will seek forgiveness of God, who pardons the penitent. Not having any motive to sin there, he *will not sin*, but at once turn to God, with whom the spiritual nature finds a natural affinity, and be happy in love, which constitutes the native element of the soul. The sinner will know of the joys of forgiveness, by being brought to the knowledge of the truth, restored to favor, and his sin remembered no more against him. He feels that his sin is blotted out and forgiven. While Saul was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the early Christians, he was arrested in his wicked career; light from heaven dawned upon his understanding, and he cried out, "Who art thou, Lord?" Suppose he had been killed, while going out on his wicked

errand, and the same light had burst upon him when he entered the future world, he would have uttered the same exclamation, "Who art thou, Lord?" "And suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven." Acts. ix. 3. And so we think this light from heaven shines round the soul when it enters the immortal world, and man becomes penitent and forgiven.

We do not attribute salvation to *death*. The mere *act of dying* has no purifying influence. But it changes man's relations, so that he is surrounded by elevating influences and redemptive agencies. Death delivers the soul from the debasing passions and appetites of the animal nature, so that it is placed in better conditions. The same instrumentality is employed undoubtedly in the conversion of the soul, after death, as was employed in the conversion of the murderous Saul, viz., "light from heaven." The murderer, like Saul, is surrounded with that light of life, of truth and love, and exclaims, "Who art thou, Lord?" God illumines the soul so that it knows Him and Jesus his Son, and has life through his name. Not having any motive to sin, the soul will not turn away from God, but will love and serve Him. Having been forgiven much, it will love much. With the view we entertain of the soul, man not entering the future life with the earthly and sensual nature, will not desire to engage in what Paul calls the "works of the flesh," which are "adultery, uncleanness, wrath, strife, envyings, murder, drunkenness, and

such like," and consequently he will be controlled by the aspirations and desires of the spiritual nature, and hence will not sin. We predicate this opinion upon the rectitude of man's moral nature. God made that nature good, with good proclivities, and holy aspirations, so that it naturally craves goodness, and pants after God as the hart panteth after the water-brook. If man now were wholly under the influence of this higher nature, he would not sin. But in this world, there is a conflict between these two natures as we have already argued. "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary, the one to the other." Gal. v. 17. When a man is arrested by death in a sinful course, he is delivered from temptation and the sensual nature which prompted the evil deed, and is surrounded by those influences which lead him into immediate repentance and reconciliation to God; so that those who die alienated and unreconciled to God are reconciled after passing into the future life. This sudden quickening of the spiritual forces of man's nature, is not unreasonable, nor opposed to facts and experience. Saul was suddenly arrested and quickly converted, and thousands on thousands are quickly turned from sin to the service of God.

"Behold the triumphs of reform in all its phases. Take, as an example, the man who, for years, has given himself up to the most reckless indulgence of appetite, rushing down from one depth of debasement to another, till he becomes degraded as a

brute, and ferocious as a fiend. See him now, all at once, sudden as the flash of the lightning, arrested in his course! A look, or a tone of the voice, a dream, a beautiful memory, the prayer of his childhood, the vision of his dead mother's sweet forgiving look, the remembrance of a sister's love, the face of a child, a strain of music, turns back the whole tide of his being; and the steps that were just now going downward to hell, are turned toward heaven!

And if such slight incidents can so suddenly arrest the sinful and criminal, and turn the whole current of thought and feeling and purpose, into a new and right direction; can death, which liberates the soul from the body and its temptations, be powerless in its influence? Is it presumption to suppose that this great event, which changes the condition, and all the outward relations of the spirit, and opens for it a new era of existence, will arrest its evil tendencies, and exert a mighty moral influence upon it? I think a just and intelligent philosophy would predict precisely such a result on inductive principles.

The growth of a plant may be hastened by an increase of light and heat, or by a more favorable location, or fitting soil. And the same result may be obtained by a peculiar dressing of the soil, or by an increase of electricity supplied to the earth and plant. But all this is in perfect harmony with the radical nature and laws of the earth or plant; nay, could not be at all, if it were not so. Whatever sudden increase of growth or productiveness is attained, is the consequence of more favorable circumstances adapted to the existing capacities, structure, and wants of the plant.

So with the soul, in the resurrection. It is brought into more favorable circumstances, and its

growth is more rapidly set forward by a great and sudden increase of spiritual light and heat; but in perfect harmony with its nature, the laws of its structure and development, and the capacities with which it was originally endowed. The germ of all the soul will attain to, and enjoy, in the future life, is doubtless within it now and here. The more genial clime of the spirit world will only quicken and develop it."[1]

We apprehend that the divine influences in which those who die in sin are placed, will so harmonize with their spiritual aspirations, that no violence will be done to their freedom, but that they will desire to be reconciled to God. All who know not God in this life, will be brought to the knowledge of God in the life to come. The whole heathen world that die in total ignorance of God, will be brought to the knowledge of the truth after death. Thus He will reconcile all things to himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. (Col. i. 20.) But will the man who has died in the commission of sin, suffer the remorse of a guilty conscience after he is reconciled to God? We think not. Standing before God as a repentant and reconciled soul, he will realize that God has forgiven him, that his sin is blotted out and is not remembered against him. We cannot think that he will suffer through eternity, by the remembrance of his former sins. God so forgives transgression and iniquity that man stands in his pres-

[1]Rev. T. B. Thayer.

ence as though he had not sinned. It was so with Moses, who murdered the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. (Ex. ii. 12.) So with David who caused Uriah to be killed for a wicked purpose. So with Saul who breathed out slaughter against the early Christians. God so forgave them, that they stood as though they had not sinned against Him. Though these men had committed murder, yet we cannot think that the remembrance of their former sins will occasion them pain, and suffering, and remorse through eternity. God so forgives their sins that they will stand before Him not as murderers, but as redeemed souls, their sins not being remembered against them.

All leave this world more or less sinful — some owe fifty pence, and some five hundred. No one dies as pure as the angels in heaven. No man is wholly and entirely saved from sin in this life. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." 1 John i. 8. If all men die more or less imperfect and sinful, all must remain in precisely the same imperfect condition in the future state, as they die, or all must be saved from imperfection and sin after death.

The best of men need to pass through a change before they are prepared for the heavenly state. No saints on earth are as pure and holy as they will be in heaven. In precisely the same ratio that they are better in heaven than they are on earth, to that extent are they saved after leaving the earthly state. Whatever creed man accepts,

all religionists must admit that there must be a change after death, because all die imperfect and sinful.

The Presbyterian Confession of Faith says:

"Sanctification is throughout in the whole man, yet imperfect in this life; there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. The imperfection of sanctification in believers ariseth from the remnants of sin abiding in every part of them, and the perpetual lustings of the flesh against the spirit; whereby they are often assailed with temptations and fall into many sins; are hindered in all their spiritual services, and their best works are imperfect and defiled in the sight of God."—*pp.* 59, 189.

If, as is here stated, "there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part" of believers even, and some "remnants of sin" in every part, so that their "best works are imperfect and defiled in the sight of God," it is quite certain that they must be saved from these "remnants of sin" after death, or remain defiled eternally. To the extent that they are delivered from this imperfection and sin, are they saved in the future life. And as Christ is the only Savior of mankind, it is evident that his redemptive work extends beyond this life. All die more or less sinful, and all must be saved to a greater or less degree after death. And as all enter the next world, more or less imperfect and ignorant, hence the next life will be a

life of growth and development. Surrounded by pure and elevating influences, we shall be schooled and make progress forever, we apprehend.

The laws of growth and development which govern the spiritual nature, will not be essentially different in the future state, from those which now govern the mind in this regard; but differently conditioned, and more favorably circumstanced, men will make more rapid progress. Standing as the soul will in the marvelous light of God's truth, and feeling the saving influences of his grace and love, delivered from the temptations and the debasing influences of earth, man will delight to go onward and upward, and develop and progress throughout the boundless ages of eternity.

If the views we have advanced are correct, man's happiness depends, not only upon his capacity for enjoyment, but upon his reconciliation to God. No man can be happy in sin; he finds permanent happiness only when he finds God. And as the larger portion of the race know not God in this life, they must be brought to the knowledge of God in the life to come. The light of life which is the light of heaven, shines round the soul, when it enters upon the immortal shore, as it shone round Saul, and the penitent soul cries out, "Lord, who art thou?" Reconciled to God it loves Him; for unto whomsoever much is forgiven, the same loves much.

HELL FOR THE WICKED.

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."—PSALMS ix. 17.

In the original Scriptures, there are four words translated hell; three are found in the New, and one in the Old Testament. Throughout the Old Testament, the English word hell is translated from the original word *sheol*, which occurs sixty-four times; though it is rendered *grave* twenty-nine times, and three times *pit*. The remaining thirty-two times it is translated *hell*, but it is the same word in the original throughout the Old Testament.

A brief reference to a few passages of Scripture will exhibit the original and primary meaning of *sheol*, rendered hell in the passage that stands at the head of this article. In Genesis xxxvii. 35, we are informed that the venerable patriarch Jacob said that he would go down to *sheol* mourning for his son. True, the translators have rendered the word *grave* in this passage, but it is the same word that is translated hell in the passage under consideration.

Sheol here cannot signify a place of endless suffering. It means simply the grave, or state of the

.ead, to which this pious man of God would go in orrow, mourning for his son. In Psalms xvi. 10, ve read as follows: "For thou wilt not leave my oul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one o see corruption." The apostle Peter, in the 2d :hapter of Acts, refers to this portion of scripture, ınd applies it to the resurrection of Christ, he ›eing the one who should not be left in hell. Job ›rayed that he might be hid in *sheol* for a season, which shows clearly that it was not understood to ›e a state of suffering after death. The Psalmist ;ays, "My life draweth nigh unto the grave." Psalms lxxviii. 3. He did not mean that he drew ıigh unto endless burnings. Again, in Psalms :xxxix. 8, we read thus: "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." Though *sheol* here is translated hell, yet all admit that it does not teach endless suffering. These scriptures clearly indicate in what sense the ancient Hebrews originally used the term *sheol*. It had reference primarily to the grave, or rather the state of the dead; though it seems sometimes to have been employed in a figurative sense to denote mental anguish and sorrow, but never to denote eternal punishment. It had no reference to the condition of man after death, as is admitted by many learned orthodox divines.

Dr. George Campbell, a divine of this school, says that "*sheol* signifies the state of the dead in general, without regard to the goodness or badness of the persons, their happiness or misery."

Dr. Allen, another eminent divine of the same school, says: "The term *sheol* itself, does not seem to mean anything more than the state of the dead, in their dark abode."

Rev. Dr. Whitby says thus: "*Sheol* throughout the Old Testament, signifies not a place of punishishment for the souls of bad men only, but the grave, or place of death."

Sufficient testimony has been adduced to convince every unprejudiced mind that *sheol*, translated hell in the passage before us, furnishes no support to the common interpretation which consigns millions of the race to hopeless despair. The context shows that the Psalmist was describing the fearful consequences of sin, and showing that the wicked could not go unpunished, but should receive merited chastisement. The retributive justice of God would follow iniquity, the wicked should be ensnared in their own work, caught in their own net, and be prematurely cut off from the earth. The wicked should be swept away by the overflowing scourge, and be suddenly and unexpectedly hurled down to death. This is evidently the meaning of our text, that the wicked shall be suddenly and unexpectedly turned into hell (*sheol*) or swept down to destruction.

Dr. Adam Clarke says the "original is very emphatic," and thinks it means turned headlong into hell, or *sheol*.

Dr. Noyes, an eminent divine, in his translation of the Psalms, gives the following version: "The

vicked shall be driven into *hades*, yea, all the na-
ions that forget God."

Dr. Alexander, Professor in the Theological
Seminary at Princeton, presents the following
ranslation and comments: "The wicked shall
urn back, even to hell, to death or to the grave,
ll nations forgetful of God. The enemies of God
nd of his people shall not only be thwarted and
epulsed, but driven to destruction, and that not
nerely individuals, but nations."

Man cannot sin with impunity; iniquity brings
ure and often sudden and swift destruction. The
Psalmist stated a general truth, applicable to indi-
viduals and nations. The wickedness of the ante-
liluvians was the cause of their being suddenly cut
off from the earth. While Noah, the righteous
nan of God was spared, they were prematurely
ut off, suddenly turned into hell, unexpectedly
nd quickly hurled to destruction, or driven into
heol.

The history of sinful Pharaoh and his wicked
osts furnishes another illustration of our text.
They oppressed the people of God, broke their own
ows and commands of the Lord, and while en-
aged in their wickedness were suddenly turned
nto *sheol.* The inhabitants of Ninevah, too, were
lestroyed for their sinfulness, and turned into hell.
And such was the fate of the inhabitants of Sodom
nd Gomorrah, and Capernaum. They all forsook
God, transgressed his commands, and the overflow-
ng scourge came upon them, and they, too, were

unexpectedly driven into *hades*. And what, alas! became of Babylon, the Great, the queen of nations, and the glory of the East? Her inhabitants became sinful and corrupt, and were driven to destruction — turned into *sheol*. That great and mighty city became desolate as a wilderness — a dwelling place for dragons — so that even to this day, the wild Arabian dare not pitch his tent there, neither do shepherds make their fold there. Where, alas! are Tyre and Sidon, and old Jerusalem, in all her magnificence and glory? History tells us that they forgot God, became proud and disobedient, filled up the measure of their iniquity, and were swept down to death.

In the 16th chapter of the Book of Numbers, we have an account of the sudden destruction of "Korah, Dathan and Abiram," and all that appertained to them. We are informed that they went down quickly into the pit, as the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up. In this passage, *sheol* is translated pit. Those referred to went down quickly to death — were suddenly destroyed; and so were the wicked persecutors of Daniel, the righteous prophet of the Lord. We need not seek other biblical illustrations of this passage. Indulgence in sin has a tendency to shorten our days, hence we are exhorted to listen to the voice of instruction and heavenly wisdom, for length of days is in her right hand, and long life will she give unto us.

Under the old dispensation, death was regarded

as a punishment for sin, being prematurely cut off from the earth; and hence Moses was commanded to go "up into this mountain Abarim, and die in the mount," because he sinned against God. (Deut. xxxii. 49, 50.) And when sudden destruction came upon the sinful, and they were swept away in their sins, it was said that they were turned or driven into *sheol;* they were unexpectedly and prematurely hurled down to death.

But, says the objector, if this is a correct view of the subject, and *sheol* means the state of the dead, wherein is there any force in the expression, "The *wicked* shall be turned into *sheol?*" Do not the righteous go down to death also? True, all must die; but there is a vast difference between dying on the gallows in shame and disgrace for crime, and dying the calm and peaceful death of the righteous. The wicked should be *turned* into *sheol*—suddenly hurled to destruction. Such was the fate of Korah and his company, of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Capernaum. There is a vast difference in going out of a man's house with his blessing upon you, and being quickly turned out. The objection is without force, for some were suddenly cut off in their iniquity, and in the sense of the Hebrew writer, were turned into hell, while the righteous went down to death rejoicing in the God of their salvation.

OUT OF THE KINGDOM.

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God."—1 CORINTHIANS vi. 9.

This language of the great apostle of the Gentiles, was addressed to his brethren at Corinth, who had departed somewhat from the teachings of Christ. He clearly exhibits the impropriety of Christians engaging in any suits at law, under the peculiar circumstances in which they were placed; knowing that the prejudices and passions of their opponents were so strongly excited against them, and the divine truths they professed, that a just verdict could not be obtained.

The tribunals of the country were all arrayed against the religion of the great Teacher, and against those who espoused his cause, and sought to be governed by the principles of his religion. "Now therefore," says Paul, "there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" That is, it would be better to be defrauded once, than to go to law before unjust men and be defrauded again by an unjust verdict. The apostle

continues his searching address in the following language:

"Now ye do wrong and defraud, and that your brethren — know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God."

The design of the apostle was to exhibit the purity of that kingdom to which he referred. It was not to be defiled by any class of sinners. No unclean thing could inherit it. Only those could enter it who were in possession of Christ's spirit of humility and love. Those who worked iniquity were not in that kingdom, for it was a kingdom of righteousness, of purity, peace and joy.

Many have failed to apprehend the meaning of the text, by an erroneous interpretation of the phrase — "Kingdom of God." Many understand this expression to refer exclusively to the immortal state of existence. While this is the more common opinion, it is but just to observe, that learned critics and commentators of different names agree in the opinion, that the phrase, "kingdom of God," refers to the gospel dispensation, or system of grace and truth which came through Jesus Christ, to be enjoyed in the present life, that kingdom which consists not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace and joy in the holy spirit.

Dr. Clarke, the Methodist commentator, consid-

ers that the expression, "kingdom of God," may have reference to the church of Christ here below. Paul did not intend to teach that the different classes of sinners spoken of, never could be saved, that they could never reach the immortal, heavenly kingdom; for he adds immediately, "And such WERE some of YOU, but ye are washed; ye are sanctified; but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the spirit of our God."

The apostle designed to teach simply, that as long as people remained sinful and unrighteous, they could not inherit a righteous kingdom; but when they turned from their unrighteousness, that they could inherit the kingdom of God, for it was a kingdom of righteousness. Thus saints were made out of sinners, the pure out of the unholy and lost, and being washed and cleansed, through the sanctifying power of truth and the grace of God, they were prepared to enter into the enjoyments of the kingdom of righteousness and peace. The kingdom of God refers to the dispensation of grace and truth, which came through Jesus Christ. In this sense, the phrases, "kingdom of God," and "kingdom of heaven," are used in the New Testament. Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. (Mark i. 14, 15.) What one calls the "kingdom of heaven," another calls the "kingdom of God," both referring to the same system of divine grace and truth. The unrighteous cannot inherit this

spiritual kingdom, for it is a kingdom of purity and love.

Before we can dwell in this kingdom, we must learn to discipline our natures, to control our passions and prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God, repent of our sins, and forsake the error of our ways, for no unholy thing can enter that kingdom. The first condition of access to its enjoyments is righteousness, purity of heart and life. Man needs no supernatural conversion, no miraculous change of nature, to become a subject of this kingdom. He must open his heart to the spiritualizing influence of divine truth and love, and then he is born of God, and inherits the kingdom. No sinner can inherit the kingdom of God, either here or hereafter; but the promise is, that all shall be delivered from sin, the moral creation translated into the glorious liberty of the children of God; every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father, and so all Israel shall be saved. But the passage under consideration, we conceive, has special application to the spiritual kingdom of the Savior on the earth, the dispensation of grace and truth given to the world through Christ.

Those converted from heathenism to the faith of the gospel, did not fully appreciate at first the nature and requirements of this spiritual kingdom of God. And the apostle found it no easy task to indoctrinate the early converts into the pure faith and holy precepts of the gospel. He taught the

necessity of departing from iniquity, after having named the name of Christ, for in no other way could they honor their professions and serve the Master. He taught them distinctly that if unrighteous, they could not be the humble followers of Christ. As long as a man remains unrighteous, he is out of the kingdom, but when he becomes righteous, he enters it. Every righteous man is now in this kingdom, while the moral state of the sinner is such as to preclude him from its enjoyments. He whose motives are pure, whose intentions are upright before God, who seeks for heavenly wisdom, as for a hidden treasure, and desires to promote the happiness of others, is kind, tender-hearted and benevolent, and is swayed continually by the loving spirit of Jesus, is a righteous man. He is governed by moral principle, deals uprightly, walks in his integrity, and exercised by the loving spirit of Christ, he is born of God, for every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He walks humbly with God, and inherits on earth Christ's spiritual kingdom of truth and righteousness.

THE FEW SAVED.

"Lord, are there few that be saved."—LUKE xiii. 23.

This passage of Scripture is often brought forward to prove that only a portion of mankind will finally reach the heavenly state. It is said that if Christ had taught the doctrine of universal salvation to the disciples, it would be absurd to suppose that they would ask him if *few* only were saved. This objection to the doctrine of Universalism is urged with great zeal by the advocates of Partialism, and regarded as quite too formidable for Universalists to grapple with.

In a volume written against Universalism, we find the argument stated in the following language:

"Up to this time, it is certain that Jesus had not informed his disciples that all men are to be saved; for it would be an impeachment of their common sense, to suppose that the disciples would have asked the Savior if *few* were to be saved, had he already taught them that all men shall be saved."

Now if there is any argument in this objection against Universalism, it applies with equal force against orthodoxy itself! If Christ *had* taught that only a *few* would be finally saved—as the

objector contends — why did they ask him if *few* only would be redeemed? If he had clearly instructed them on that point, as Partialism affirms, why should they propound such a query? To apply the argument of the objector to orthodoxy, we should say, "Up to this time it is certain that Jesus had not informed his disciples that a part of mankind only would be saved; for it would be an impeachment of their common sense to suppose that the disciples would have asked the Savior if *few* were to be saved, had he already taught them such a sentiment."

The disciples, it is said, would not have sought information upon a subject in which they had been clearly instructed by their Master, and yet it is affirmed, they ask him whether a few only will finally reach heaven, when this had been the main burden of his teachings concerning human destiny! Orthodoxy asserts that Christ taught no other doctrine; that he and his disciples believed that only a few would finally be saved. If so, why should the disciples ask him such a question? "It would be an impeachment of their common sense," to ask him if few were to be saved, had he already distinctly taught them such a sentiment.

The passage has no reference, we conceive, to the immortal state of existence; but has special application to the Savior's kingdom of truth and righteousness which he came to establish in the earth, and to those fearful judgments coming upon those who rejected that kingdom. By the simili-

tude of the "mustard seed," and the "leaven hid in three measures of meal," Jesus set forth the progressive work of his heavenly kingdom, indicating great and glorious results from his system of religion, which should continue to extend till all should feel its divine influence and power.

The preceding verse informs us that Jesus journeyed toward Jerusalem, still teaching as he passed along. This is supposed to be his last journey to the holy city; and it is natural to suppose that his mind must have been occupied, not only with the greatness of his mission, but he must have considered the fate that awaited him, and the righteous retribution coming upon those who rejected his religion.

The passage we are considering and the succeeding context, shows clearly that Jesus had made some reference to the desolation coming upon the house of Israel, and that ill-fated city to which he journeyed. The disciples saw the hostility of the people to the Savior and his kingdom, and feeling the need of more light and instruction concerning the success of his mission, and the fate and number of those who should be visited with swift destruction, one says, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" Lord, you tell us of the greatness and extent of your kingdom; behold, how few followers you now have! How can your religion triumph as you teach? You see how small a number accept your doctrine and enter your kingdom. Shall only a few be saved—saved from blindness,

sin and unbelief, and from the judgments coming on those who reject your teachings and kingdom?

The reply of our Lord indicated the nature of the salvation referred to: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many will seek to enter in and shall not be able." As much as to say: "Closely adhere to me; follow my instructions; obey my teachings and confide in my word; my truth shall sweep on, conquering unto conquest; but you should make practical my religion, remain firm to my cause, steadfast in the truth, for only such as endure unto the end shall be saved from the fearful woes coming upon this generation." Comparatively few would enter his kingdom, before severe national judgments should come upon those who rejected him. Then they would seek to enter in, but should not be able. Having filled up the measure of their iniquity, they should suffer righteous retribution for their sins. Those few who gave heed to the instructions of Christ, were saved from sin and error, and the retribution which came upon the disobedient and sinful. The important truth taught, is fidelity to Christ and his heavenly kingdom, under all circumstances in life.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

"In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments."—LUKE xvi. 23.

That we may more readily apprehend the meaning of the Savior, and appreciate the important truths which he designed to present in this parable, which we now propose to examine, it is necessary to understand the circumstances under which it was uttered, and consider the preceding context, which has an important bearing upon the parable, and which will essentially aid us in our present investigation.

This parable is found in connection with a series of illustrations that composed one unbroken discourse of our Lord, and was addressed to the same audience, and for a specific purpose. At the commencement of the preceding chapter, we learn the character of the audience addressed. "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners, for to hear him. And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying: This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Luke xv. 1, 2.

Gathered about the Savior were publicans and sinners, who exhibited a willingness to be instruct-

ed by the great Teacher, many of whom embraced his religion; and also were present, haughty, aristocratic Scribes and Pharisees, who were puffed up with a conceit of their own spiritual attainments and religious excellencies. They regarded themselves as the special favorites of God, and sought every opportunity to accuse Jesus and his followers with impiety, and teaching doctrines which were immoral in their tendency and influence. They murmured against the Savior for communing with publicans and sinners, upon whom they looked only with contempt. Jesus, knowing well the character of the people whom he addressed, adapted his instructions to their circumstances and wants — first, by the parable of the lost sheep, which is doubtless familiar to the minds of all our readers.

A good shepherd who had lost a sheep, would make diligent search for it till it was found, and instead of finding fault with a shepherd who should seek the lost sheep, every such effort would receive the hearty commendation of all. There would be rejoicing even, that his efforts had been crowned with success.

Jesus evidently designed by this illustration to rebuke the Pharisees for murmuring at him in his efforts to seek and save the lost publicans and sinners. The Pharisees contended, that they themselves were not lost, but that the publicans and sinners *were* in this condition, and, consequently, that these were the very individuals whom Jesus came to seek; and hence, instead of murmuring as

they did, they should have rejoiced that the lost was sought after and found. The same sentiment is taught in the succeeding parable, with a similar application. When the woman found the lost piece of silver, those around her rejoiced in her successful efforts. So there was joy among the angels of God when the erring child of humanity turned from his waywardness and set his feet towards the heavenly Zion. And if the Scribes and Pharisees were in sympathy with the angelic hosts, then they would rejoice that the lost was found. But they exhibited no joyful emotions that the wanderer returned to the fold of Christ, clearly indicating that they were not animated with the angelic spirit. The successful mission of the Savior is clearly taught in these parables. The lost sheep and lost piece of silver were sought after till they were found. This is as distinctly taught as that they were lost.

By these illustrations, thus skillfully arranged and wisely adapted to the occasion, did Jesus exhibit the preciousness of humanity, lost in sin and error, and thus justify his course in seeking the redemption of man, though never so debased by sin. All were precious in the Father's sight, and, hence, all were embraced in his divine and holy mission. He came especially to seek and save that which was lost; and the Scribes and Pharisees ought to have rejoiced in the success of his efforts. But instead of this, they murmured against him, because he received sinners and ate with them.

Continuing his discourse, the Savior introduces the parable of the prodigal son, which is full of doctrinal and practical instruction, and which is doubtless familiar to the reader. Considered in connection with the preceding illustrations, its meaning is so obvious that extended remarks upon it are uncalled for. The publicans and sinners had expressed a willingness to listen to the great Teacher, and accept his instructions — to believe on the Son of God, and enter into life. They expressed a desire to return from their prodigality, to arise and go to their Father's house, where there was bread enough and to spare. They were in a famishing condition, dead in trespasses and sin; but returning from their prodigality, they are spoken of as one who was dead, and is alive again — who was lost and is found. The intelligent reader cannot fail to see in the conduct of the "elder son," a vivid portraiture of the proud and self-righteous Pharisee, who is always ready to complain when blessings are meted out to other souls!

Although the fifteenth chapter closes with this parable, yet the subject is continued, as we shall see, as we proceed. Jesus unquestionably intended to frame these illustrations so that the people addressed should feel the full force of the truths he designed to convey, and the keenness of the reproof they contained. He thus held up before them a mirror in which they might see themselves. Hence, he introduces the parable of the rich man and his unfaithful steward. The conduct of the

Scribes and Pharisees is undoubtedly here referred to. As expounders of the law of Moses, they had been unfaithful and unjust. They labored to serve God and mammon, to administer the law professedly for sacred purposes, but actually to secure their own selfish ends. They perverted the law, misdirected the people in their gifts, wrongfully appropriated to their own use what should have been given into the treasury of the Lord. In this way they made void the law of God through their traditions, and attempted to serve God and mammon. The Scribes and Pharisees professed to be stewards of God, and yet taught the people to transgress God's commandments; and Jesus reproved them for their hypocrisy and deceit. They perceived his purpose, understood the similitude as applicable to themselves, and then they no longer concealed their excited emotions, but showed signs of anger by deriding him. At the fourteenth verse, we read as follows: "And the Pharisees also who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him." They were conscious of guilt, and having their conduct exposed, they became deeply enraged. Then Jesus turns to them, and says, pointedly: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men, is an abomination in the sight of God." The Scribes and Pharisees justified themselves in their wicked perversion of the law, in making it conducive to their own selfish ends; when, in fact, they were relieved

from all obligations to the law after Christ came and superceded the law of rites and ceremonies by his own blessed religion. In still adhering to the law after it was abrogated, by the introduction of the gospel into the world, Jesus showed them, by another parable, that the attachment was illegal, and that they were like a man who should marry a woman who was put away from her husband. And this was the condition of the Pharisees; for they still adhered to the law — were wedded to it, after it was put away, by the introduction of the new and better covenant.

With this examination of the preceding context, we are now prepared to appreciate more readily and clearly the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Through all this discourse of our Lord, the Pharisees had been put upon trial, their conduct examined, the motives of their hearts laid open, and, on being found guilty, full of hypocrisy and deceit, he proceeds to point out the merited retribution which awaited them for their sins.

Jesus speaks of the prosperity of the Scribes and Pharisees by saying, that the rich man was clad in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. But prosperity had not led them to God; they became proud and haughty, and disobeyed the commands of heaven. They trampled upon the requisitions of the Most High, and were unfaithful stewards of God's law. Their condition was similar to that of Israel, spoken of in the 32d chapter of Deuteronomy. Jeshurun, who here

represents Israel, forsook God who made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. Israel became a froward generation — children in whom there was no faith, and after filling up the measure of their iniquity, the Lord is represented as saying that a fire was kindled in his anger which should burn to the lowest hell, and consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of her mountains. This referred simply to the temporal ruin and judgments coming upon the sinful and disobedient. Their severe chastisement is spoken of under the following highly figurative language: "I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heart, and with bitter destruction," etc.

This account of Israel gives a very vivid and faithful portraiture of the condition of the Scribes and Pharisees, whom the Savior addressed in the series of parables we have considered. They, too, grew proud and haughty, and forsook the God that made them, and lightly esteemed the Rock of their salvation. They were unfaithful to their high trusts, and abandoned the service of God; taught, for doctrines, the commandments of men, and made void the law of God through their traditions. They were soon to be punished for their sins. A fire was about to be kindled that should burn them to the lowest hell. They were to be *burnt with hunger*, and devoured with burning heat. The poor, despised publicans and sinners were repre-

sented by the "beggar" in the parable, and the Scribes and Pharisees by the "rich man."

The condition of these two classes of individuals was greatly changed. The publicans and sinners exhibited a willingness to listen to the divine teachings of Jesus, to turn from the error of their ways and enter into the kingdom of God. (Matt. xxi. 32; Luke iii. 12.) Some of this class believed on Jesus; and being thus exalted, morally raised from their spiritually dead condition, they are represented in the parable as being carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. In becoming Christians, they lost their national citizenship, were no longer Jews nor Greeks, Barbarian, nor Sythian, bond nor free, but were all one in Christ. Being Christ's, they were of Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Gal. iii. 28, 29).

To be in "Abraham's bosom" was a figurative expression, indicating simply, that those referred to were of the faith of Abraham. This language shows conclusively, that the account is not to be understood literally; the absolute impossibility of such a construction of the language, argues conclusively that it is figurative and parabolic. One man was not in the literal bosom of another! But this we must believe on the supposition that the account is a literal statement of facts and not a parable. But the language is figurative. To be in "Abraham's bosom," was to be in possession of the faith which animated the bosom of Abraham, the faith which found a lodgment in his heart; for

Paul teaches, that "They which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham." Gal. iii. 9.

The rich man also died and was buried—a fact not stated of the "beggar"—"and in hell, he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." The word rendered hell here is *hades*, and corresponds to *sheol* of the Old Testament. Dr. George Campbell, a learned Presbyterian divine, tells us that, in his judgment, it ought NEVER, in scripture, to be rendered *hell*, at least in the sense in which that word is universally understood among Christians. Dr. Campbell gives us the meaning of *sheol*, and defines *hades* in the following language:

"As to the word *hades*, which occurs in eleven places of the New Testament, and is rendered *hell* in all except one, where it is translated *grave*, it is quite common in classsical authors, and frequently used by the Seventy in the translation of the Old Testament. In my judgment, it ought never in Scripture to be rendered *hell*, at least, in the sense wherein that word is now universally understood by Christians. In the Old Testament, the corresponding word is *sheol*, which signifies the state of the dead in general, without regard to the goodness or badness of the persons, their happiness or misery. In translating that word, the Seventy have almost invariably used *hades*. The state is always represented under those figures which suggest something dreadful, dark, and silent, about which the most prying eye, and listening ear, can acquire no information. The term *hades* is well adapted to express this idea. To this, the word *hell* in its primitive signification perfectly corresponds; for, at first, it denoted only what was sacred or concealed.

This word is found with little variation of form, and precisely in the same meaning, in all the Teutonic dialects. * * * * * *

It is very plain, that neither in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, nor in the New, does the word *hades* convey the meaning which the present English word *hell*, in the Christian usage, always conveys to our minds."—*Diss. vi., pp.* 180–1.

That is, in his judgment, it ought NEVER to be used to signify endless misery. It never was used in this sense among the ancients, never referred to punishment in the future world as human creeds teach.

The Savior used it in the parable before us in a figurative sense, to set forth the merited retribution of the Pharisees, who were to be brought into a low and degraded condition, just as it is used in the 10th chapter of Luke: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shall be brought down to hell" (*hades.*) All that was intended here by the people being exalted to heaven was, that they enjoyed high and exalted privileges, and they were said to be thrust down to hell when those privileges were taken from them, and they were brought into a low and degraded condition. Such was the moral condition and fate of the Pharisees. Once the depositories of God's truth, in the enjoyment of exalted privileges, but in their haughtiness, they forsook the God that made them, and lightly esteemed the Rock of their salvation. They rebelled against God; and after they filled up the meas-

ure of their iniquity, a most fearful destruction overtook them, which brought them into a low state of degradation and misery. So severe was the retribution, that they are represented as saying: "I am tormented in this flame." This was not a literal flame of fire; it was highly figurative language, employed to set forth the severe punishment about to come upon the Scribes and Pharisees. We have already seen that Moses employed similar phraseology to set forth the fearful punishments to come upon Israel, where it is said that the people should be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat.

Jesus knew well that the great city of the Pharisees was soon to be visited with famine, pestilence and war; that the overflowing scourge should be upon it, and that there should be a time of trouble such as had not been from the beginning of the world, nor ever should be again. He knew the terrible desolation soon to come upon the people, that they would be cut off by famine and be burnt with hunger, as Israel had previously been. "They shalt be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust." Deut. xxxii. 24. Hence they are represented as being tormented in this flame, and, like Capernaum, brought down to *hades*, in a low state of degradation and suffering. Those who received Christ and obeyed his instructions, escaped that flame — were not "burnt with

hunger;" while those who gave no heed to his teachings lifted up their eyes in its torments. They rejected the Lord's anointed, and put him to an open shame, and consequently, they suffered merited retribution. They lifted up their eyes in torment, being burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat. But Abraham said: "Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

On the supposition that this passage refers to the immortal world, and is a literal account as many believe, then it teaches that the inhabitants of heaven and hell are sufficiently near each other to converse together! The redeemed in heaven, then, see the misery of the damned in hell! And would not such an awful sight render the redeemed unhappy? On earth, imperfect as man is, such a sight would fill him with horror. No man, with a tender and sympathetic nature, could stand by unmoved and see his kindred rolling upon a bed of burning coals. And is there less compassion, less sympathy, less pity in heaven? Does heaven so harden the heart that the mother can be happy there and witness the endless torment of her child, and shout glory to God as she witnesses the misery of her offspring in hell? Would not the mother's heart heave with agonized emotions as she saw her child wrapped in sheet of flame and hear the wails of her offspring? Could it be a heaven of happiness and joy to her? Abraham in heaven, it is

said, saw the rich man in hell "lifting up his eyes in torment," and conversed with him.

But this language has no reference to the future world, we apprehend. Once the Pharisees enjoyed exalted privileges, and received many "good things," and the publicans and sinners "evil things;" but now their conditions are represented as being changed according to their merits. The parable continues thus: "And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." If this refers to the future world, as the sacrificial theology affirms, then it shows that there are some in heaven who would go to hell, were they not prevented by the "great gulf;" for the language is: "They that would go from hence to you cannot," plainly implying that they would go if they could do so! And why should not those in heaven seek to rescue their friends in hell? But the subject has no reference to the immortal state of existence. The Savior was speaking of the destruction about to come upon Jerusalem, the great city of the Scribes and Pharisees. When that city was besieged by the Romans, a wide, deep trench was made all around it, to prevent any one passing to and from the city. The wicked Pharisees, who were hemmed in by the enemy, could not pass out; and those without the city, who would grant relief to their friends within, could not then do it; all ingress and egress was

cut off—no passing to and from the place, for an impassable gulf was there.

Reference is made to this "great gulf" in the 19th chapter of Luke at the 41st verse and onward, in the following language:

"And when he (Jesus) was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying: If thou hadst known, even thou, at least, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

This *trench* which kept the people in on every side, was evidently the impassable gulf referred to. No relief could be obtained from friends without the city, not even water to cool their parched tongues. The people were tormented with famine, being *burnt with hunger*, so that Josephus tells us that the inhabitants seemed like ghosts in the streets, and the mother, famishing for food, ate her own babe. This was the flame in which they lifted up their eyes, being in torment.

The parable continues, representing the rich man as offering a petition to Father Abraham in behalf of his five brethren, that they might not be involved in the same ruin and misery. The brethren referred to were the national brethren of the

Scribes and Pharisees, who had not been overwhelmed in the terrible calamities which came upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and who had not felt the burning of hunger. The prayer certainly was a most benevolent one. The reply was: "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." That is, let them listen to what Moses and the prophets have said concerning the judgments of God on the disobedient and sinful, and take warning. But Moses had said nothing in regard to a place of torment in the future world. This is admitted by eminently learned divines of the orthodox church. We quote the following orthodox divines upon this point, to show that a state of future punishment was not held up as a motive to the people under the Mosaic economy:

MILMAN. — "The sanction on which the Hebrew law was founded is extraordinary. The lawgiver (Moses) maintains a profound silence on that fundamental article, if not of political, at least, of religious legislation — rewards and punishments in another life. He substituted temporal chastisements and temporal blessings. On the violation of the constitution, followed inevitably blighted harvests, famine, pestilence, defeat, captivity; on its maintenance, abundance, health, fruitfulness, victory, independence. How wonderfully the event verified the prediction of the inspired legislator! how invariably apostacy led to adversity — repentance and reformation to prosperity."

BISHOP WARBURTON. — "In the Jewish republic, both the rewards and punishments promised by heaven were temporal only. Such as health, long

life, peace, plenty, and dominion, etc. Diseases, premature death, war, famine, want, subjections, and captivity, etc. And in no one place of the Mosaic Institutes is there the least mention, or any intelligible hint of the rewards and punishments of another life.

When Solomon restored the integrity of religion, he addressed a long prayer to the God of Israel, consisting of one solemn petition for the continuance of the old covenant, made by the ministry of Moses. He gives us an exact account of all its parts, and explains at large the sanctions of the Jewish law and religion. And here, as in the writings of Moses, we find nothing but temporal rewards and punishments."

PALEY.—"This (Mosaic) dispensation dealt in temporal rewards and punishments. In the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy you find Moses, with prodigious solemnity, pronounce the blessings and cursings which awaited the children of Israel under the dispensation to which they were called. And you will observe, that these blessings consisted altogether of worldly benefits, and these curses of worldly punishments."

Jahn, whose excellent work is a text-book in the Andover Theological Seminary, says:

"We have not authority, therefore, decidedly to say, that any other motives were held out to the ancient Hebrews to pursue the good and avoid the evil, than those which were derived from the rewards and punishments of this life."

If, as these divines contend, no other motives were held out by Moses but the rewards and punishments of this life, he certainly did not teach

endless punishment for the sins of this life. But Moses had spoken of temporal calamities, of severe national judgments which were to come upon the disobedient and sinful in this life, and of the people being burnt with hunger, as we have seen. And hence the propriety of directing the people to consult the writings of Moses and the prophets.

They will not credit Moses, but if one should go unto them from the dead they will repent; or, if one were raised from the dead they would believe. But of this even there was no certainty. Jesus had presented the highest evidence to them that he was the Son of God, the Messiah of the prophets, even raised the dead, and they believed not. Let them take warning from Moses whom they profess to receive as authority.

We regard this to be the correct exposition of this portion of the Word of God. To our mind it appears natural, reasonable and scriptural.

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

"Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."—MATTHEW xii. 31, 32.

It is believed by many that the doctrine of endless punishment is distinctly taught in this portion of Scripture. We therefore ask the candid attention of the reader to the following points:

1. It is maintained by this class of religionists that there are three persons in the Godhead — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one, the true, eternal God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. If then these three are one, how can a sin be committed against *one* of the persons of the Godhead, and not be committed against the other? The common sentiment is, that a sin committed against the Father, or the Son, is pardonable, while an offence against the Holy Ghost is *never* to be forgiven. But how can this be, if the doctrine of the Trinity be true? Is not a sin against the Father or the

Son, equally a sin against the Holy Ghost; and if a sin against the latter be unpardonable, is not a sin against the former equally so? And do not those, therefore, who teach the doctrine that a sin against the Holy Spirit can never be forgiven, whilst all others against the Father or the Son may be pardoned, deny in so doing, the doctrine of the Trinity?

2. According to Dr. Adam Clarke, who is good authority among the dominant sects, only a few Jews, who witnessed the miracles of Christ, and ascribed them to the agency of the devil, are guilty of the "unpardonable sin." He contends that it is not committed at the present day. His language is, "Any penitent may find mercy through Christ Jesus; for through him any kind of sin may be forgiven to man, except the sin against the Holy Ghost, which I have proved no man can now commit."—*Clarke on* 1 *John* v. 16. And again, "No man who believes the divine mission of Jesus Christ, ever can commit this sin."

The text positively asserts that "all manner of sin and blasphemy *shall* be forgiven unto men," except the sin against the "Holy Ghost," and the same assertion is found in all the parallel passages. If, therefore, it be used to prove the doctrine of endless misery, it can also be employed to substantiate the very reverse; for it as positively asserts that all manner of sin and blasphemy "*shall be forgiven*," as that the sin against the "Holy Ghost," shall not. And if, therefore, there be evi-

dence in this and the parallel passages, to warrant a belief that the "sin against the Holy Ghost" shall *not* be forgiven, there is equal evidence, from the same passages, to believe, that "all manner of sin and blasphemy" besides this "shall be forgiven." We acknowledge that the sin against the Holy Ghost may not have been forgiven either in the world or age in which it was spoken, nor in that which immediately followed; but we still contend that all Israel will finally be saved according to the promise.

3. The common exposition of the subject cannot be reconciled with the popular view of the phrase, "the world to come," which it is believed, has reference to the future state of being. But how can the advocates of endless misery account for the Savior affirming that the sin against the Holy Ghost should not be forgiven in the future, eternal world? Had he ever taught that any sin would be forgiven there? They do not believe it, and hence such an affirmation would have been uncalled for, and superfluous. To affirm that a specific sin should not be forgiven "in this world," plainly implies that other sins could be forgiven, and so in relation to "the world to come." Hence, the expression must have reference to a time when, and a place where, sins could be forgiven. As orthodox religionists do not believe that *any* sin can be forgiven in the immortal world, they cannot believe the phrase in question has reference to that world. Then to be consistent, they must interpret the text

so that the expression, "this world and the world to come," will refer to a time when, and a place where, sins may be forgiven.

We come now to an affirmative consideration of the text. In order to understand the subject before us, we will inquire,

1. In what did the sin against the Holy Ghost consist? The context plainly shows that it was attributing the miracles of Christ to the prince of devils. Jesus had wrought a good work, had performed a notable miracle, restoring sight to the blind, and speech to the dumb, "insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw." The Pharisees perceiving that the people were amazed, and that they evidently began to regard him as a divine being, attributed the wonderful deed to the agency of evil spirits. They did not deny the miracle, but they would not confess that Christ was the Son of God, upon whom the spirit of the Lord, the "Holy Ghost," was poured out without measure. The sin against the "Holy Ghost" consisted in attributing to infernal agency what was effected by the power and spirit of God. It was wilfully resisting the greatest evidence that could be presented, that Jesus was the Messiah of God.

But Christ exposed the sophistry of the Pharisees. They supposed that the kingdom of Satan would remain to all eternity, and therefore could not believe that Satan would employ any means to overthrow himself. He would rather seek the extension of his dominions than their destruction,

and by such reasoning, Christ exposed the falsity of this assertion of the Pharisees.

Mark iii. 30, shows conclusively that the sin against the "Holy Ghost" consisted in ascribing to infernal agency the work of God—"Because they said, he hath an unclean spirit." Dr. Adam Clarke says, after quoting this passage, "Here the matter is made clear beyond the smallest doubt—the unpardonable sin, as some term it, is nothing less nor more than ascribing the miracles Christ wrought by the power of God, to the spirit of the devil."

Dr. Clarke thinks that no man can now commit the sin against the Holy Ghost. In his comments on 1 John v. 16, we find the following: "Any penitent may find mercy through Christ Jesus; for through him every kind of sin may be forgiven to man, except the sin against the Holy Ghost, which I have proved NO MAN CAN NOW COMMIT."

2. What is to be understood by the expression, "shall not be forgiven unto men?" Evidently Jesus did not intend to affirm that it was absolutely impossible for the Pharisees, who committed this sin, to turn from their wickedness, and obtain forgiveness of God. He neither taught that it was impossible for them to repent, nor for God to pardon, for man is called upon to repent of his sins, and is recognized as being capable of complying with the requisition, and Deity is ever exhibited as as a sin-pardoning God, as ready always to forgive the returning prodigal.

This expression may be easily understood by reference to the mode of speech common among the ancients. When one of two things was much more difficult to be done than the other, it was common for the Jews to say that one should be, and that the other should not be. And as it would be more difficult to turn the Pharisees from the sin of rejecting Christ than from any other, hence came the expression of Jesus, "should not be forgiven." They had rejected the highest and strongest evidence that could be presented in favor of Christ being the Sent of God, and it was improbable therefore, that they would ever be convinced.

Grotius, a learned orthodox divine says:

"This form of speech is a common Hebraism; the Jews often said *this shall be, and that shall not be;* not intending, however, to affirm absolutely that the first should be, but merely to show that the last was much more unlikely or difficult than the first. The sense is this: any crime which may be committed, even all calumnies (or blasphemies,) which hold the first rank among crimes, may be forgiven more readily than the calumny (or blasphemy,) against the spirit of God."—*See Paige's Selections.*

Bishop Newton says:

"It is a common figure of speech in the oriental languages, to say of two things, that the one shall be, and the other shall not be, when the meaning is only that the one shall happen sooner or more easily than the other."

Obviously, then, the meaning of the phrase is

simply this: that other sins and blasphemies would be more readily forgiven than the sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, because he who should commit this sin would manifest a degree of depravity that would render it more difficult for him to repent of this, than of any other sin.

3. What is meant by the words, "this world and the world to come?" The word here rendered "world," is the same in the original as is elsewhere in the Scriptures, translated "ages," and very properly might have been also rendered "age."

Hebrews ix. 26: "Now once in the end of the *world*, hath he [Christ] appeared to put away sin [sin-offering,] by the sacrifice of himself." Christ appeared eighteen hundred years ago, at the end of the Jewish age, and offered himself once for all, a sacrifice for sin. Here the end of the Jewish economy was called the end of the world.

1 Corinthians x. 11: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the *ends of the world* are come." Here again the word "world" should have been rendered "age," as every one will perceive.

Dr. Adam Clarke says:

"'Neither in this world,' etc. Though I follow the common translation, yet I am fully satisfied the meaning of the word is, neither in this dispensation, viz., the Jewish, nor in that which is to come, viz., the Christian."

Dr. Pearce comments on this expression as follows:

"'Neither in this world,' etc.; rather, neither in this age, nor in the age to come; i. e., neither in this age, when the law of Moses subsists, nor in that also, when the kingdom of heaven, which is at hand, shall succeed to it. This is a strong way of expressing how difficult a thing it was for such a sinner to obtain pardon."

Here the following objection may be raised. Admit that "world" means "age," the sin is then not to be forgiven, neither under the Jewish nor the Christian age; hence, it will never be forgiven.

The error of the objection lies in considering the Christian age to embrace the whole of the Messiah's reign, which is both unnecessary and untrue. There were ages under the Jewish dispensation, there are ages under the Christian economy. Calmet informs us that the time preceding the birth of Christ, was divided into six ages; and under the Christian dispensation we know there will be more than one age, as we read of "ages to come," in Ephesians ii. 7, where the same word in the plural form is used in the original that is employed in this passage, the one however being rendered *age*, the other *world*. So if the Pharisees did not repent in the succeeding age, they might afterwards. There is no evidence that the Pharisees or any of the Jews were to suffer endless misery; on the contrary, they are included in the arms of redemption, for all Israel shall be saved. (Rom. xi.

26, 32.) All are to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The language "hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation," employed by St. Mark, furnishes no objection to our exposition of the subject. A more correct rendering would be—"hath not forgiveness to the age," [Paige] and would be in danger of "eternal punishment," as Dr. Campbell translates it. The word rendered "eternal," is *aionion* in the original, an adjective derived from the Greek word *aion*, which signifies "age." It is applied to that which is limited in duration, as also to that which is endless in its nature. We can determine nothing in reference to duration, simply by the use of this term. An indefinite period of time is here meant by it, and it would be more correctly rendered "age-lasting." They were in danger of age-lasting punishment.

The word rendered "damnation" is the same in the original as is often translated "judgment," and sometimes "condemnation" and "condemn." Those threatened were to suffer damnation or condemnation. Theirs was the condemnation that light came into this world, and they loved darkness rather than light. Their minds were filled with doubt and darkness and unbelief, therefore were they damned: "for he that doubteth *is damned*."

IN DANGER OF HELL-FIRE.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, *Thou* fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire."—MATTHEW v. 21, 22.

The object of the Savior in uttering these words, was to exhibit the superiority of his religion over the teachings of Judaism, inasmuch as that took cognizance of the thoughts and motives of the heart, and judged man according to his intentions. Jesus looked beneath the outward forms, at the thoughts and purposes of the soul, and before his judgment-seat man stood condemned if he were actuated by impure motives. In the passage we now consider, Jesus alludes to the awful crime of murder, and to the prohibition given to the Jews in regard to the sacredness of human life. After referring to the legal tribunal before which the guilty should be brought for trial, he points out the difference between his religion and Judaism, and illustrates the principle upon which the laws of his spiritual kingdom are enforced. He came to erect

his throne in the human heart, to govern the affections, and hence he judged man according to the *motives* by which he was actuated. Unlike the teachings of Judaism, Jesus taught that it was not absolutely necessary to commit the overt act, to be guilty before God, but if a man wickedly gave way to temptation, and harbored vile passions and purposes, he was guilty before God and amenable to the divine law. He who *hated* his brother was a murderer. Jesus also taught that punishment under his rule was proportioned to criminality, as under the legal dispensation. He refers to three distinct modes of punishment recognized by Jewish regulations. Each one of these exceeded the other in severity. They were, first, strangling or beheading; second, stoning; and third, burning alive.

The lower tribunal or court, referred to in the passage before us, by the term "judgment," was composed of twenty-three judges, or as some learned men think, of seven judges and two scribes. The higher tribunal, or "council," was doubtless the Sanhedrim, the highest ecclesiastical and civil tribunal of the Jews, composed of seventy judges, whose prerogative it was to judge the greatest offenders of the law, and could even condemn the guilty to death. They were often condemned to *gehenna*-fire, or as it is translated *hell-fire*. In this place, which bordered on the south of Jerusalem, criminals, it is said, were burnt alive. No allusion is made here to the immortal world, as

many have erroneously supposed. Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist divine, comments as follows on the phrase "hell-fire:"

"Our Lord here alludes to the valley of the son of Hinnom. This place was near Jerusalem; and had been formerly used for these abominable sacrifices, in which the idolatrous Jews had caused their children to pass through the fire to Moloch."

In the Old Testament, there are many allusions to this *gehenna* of fire, but there is not a single passage where any reference is made to the immortal world. It is used in a figurative sense to portray temporal calamities and severe national judgments, but never employed to represent endless misery and woe. This phrase occurs twelve times in the New Testament, and is invariably applied to the Jews, the Gentiles never having been warned against it, nor threatened with it. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that they were not exposed to it.

Jesus did not intend to say, that under the Christian dispensation, men should be brought before the different tribunals referred to in the text, to be adjudicated, but he designed to show that under the new economy of grace and truth, man was still a subject of retributive justice, but was judged according to the motives of the heart. "But I say unto you, whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment." According to the Christian principle, man is guilty if he *designs* to do wrong. Some learned

divines think that the following would be a better rendering of the original: "I say unto you, that every one who is vainly incensed against his brother, shall be obnoxious to the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, [i. e., thou worthless fellow,] shall be obnoxious to the Sanhedrim; and whosoever shall say Moreh, [i. e., thou wretch,] shall be obnoxious to the *gehenna* of fire." Dr. Campbell, a learned orthodox divine, regards this as the correct translation.

Allusion is here made to the different courts among the Jews that administered different kinds of punishment. And the object of Christ was to show that in the administration of his kingdom, punishment was proportioned to the nature of the offence. Christ did not design to teach that an individual would be tormented eternally for saying "Thou fool;" for both he and the apostles used the expression. Christ said: "O *fools*, and slow of heart." "Thou fool," says Paul, "that which thou sowest cannot be quickened except it die." It is recorded twice in the 23d chapter of Matthew, that Jesus called the Jews "fools," and hence we cannot suppose that he would condemn a man to endless pain for using the term. No allusion is made to the immortal world.

Dr. Campbell, an orthodox divine, remarks as follows on this passage:

"In the common translation of the verse there is a confounding of things present and future — of things human and divine — that badly comports

with the wisdom and dignity of the speaker! What affinity exists between judges, a council and hell-fire? Why should an expression of anger, only subject a person to human judges, and another subject him to hell-fire in the usual sense of those words? Now if the terms in the verse conveyed the same meaning to us, which they conveyed to the audience, which the Savior at that time addressed, we should discover a propriety and beauty in them which is not manifest in the common translation of them. The fact is, the allusions in this verse are all to human institutions or customs among the Jews, and the judges, the Sanhedrim and the hell-fire here introduced, are all human punishments!"

This language evidently cannot be understood literally. Jesus did not design to teach that those who were angry without a cause, were really in danger of the "judgment," or liable to be brought before the lower courts of the Jews, that whoever shall call his brother Raca, that is, "shallow-brained," or "blockhead," was really in danger of the "council," or the higher court of the Jews, called the Sanhedrim. No one supposes that this is to be understood literally, that an indulgence of these passions really subjected an individual to these Jewish courts. Neither can we rationally suppose that our Lord designed to teach that if an individual called another a "fool," or apostate, or miscreant, or wretch, that he was really in danger of *gehenna-fire*, translated hell-fire.

But Jesus referred to these different offenses and grades of punishment among the Jews, to show

that under the new dispensation punishment should be proportioned to the offence, and an adequate retribution would be visited upon the transgressor.

We ask the reader's attention to the opinions of several learned commentators upon this passage. Dr. Adam Clarke says:

"It is very probable that our Lord means no more here than this: "if a man charge another with apostacy from the Jewish religion, or rebellion against God, and cannot prove his charge, then he is exposed to that punishment (burning alive) which the other must have suffered, if the charges had been substantiated. There are three offenses here which exceed each other in their degrees of guilt. 1. *Anger* against a man, accompanied with some injurious act. 2. *Contempt*, expressed by the opprobrious epithet *raca*, or shallow brains. 3. *Hatred* and *mortal enmity*, expressed by the term *moreh*, or apostate, where such apostacy could not be proved.

Now proportioned to these three offenses were three different degrees of punishment, each exceeding the other in severity, as the offenses exceeded each other in their different degrees of guilt. 1. The *judgment*, the council of twenty-three, which could inflict the punishment of strangling. 2. The *Sanhedrim*, or great council, which could inflict the punishment of stoning. 3. The being burnt in the valley of the son of Hinnom. This appears to be the meaning of our Lord."—*Com. in loc.*

Rev. Mr. Parkhurst, in his Lexicon, referring to this passage, says:

"The phrase here translated hell-fire, (literally *gehenna of fire*) does, I apprehend, in its outward

and primary sense, relate to that dreadful doom of being burnt alive in the valley of Hinnom;" he adds (for what reason he does not inform us) "that this, as well as the other degrees of punishment mentioned in the context, must, as Dr. Doddridge has remarked, be ultimately referred to the invisible world."

WYNNE.—"This alludes to the three degrees of punishment among the Jews, viz.: civil punishment inflicted by the judges or elders at the gates; excommunication pronounced by the great Ecclesiastical Council or *Sanhedrim;* and burning to death, like those who were sacrificed to devils in the valley of Hinnom or Tophet, where the idolatrous Israelites used to offer their children to Moloch."—*Note in loc.*

The meaning of the passage seems to be this: under the old economy all transgression was adequately punished, so under the new dispensation of grace and truth, punishment was proportioned to guilt, and would be inflicted, according to the degree of criminality.

SCARCELY SAVED.

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear."—1 PETER iv. 17, 18.

In examining this passage, let us first attempt to ascertain what is meant by judgment beginning at the house of God? This point, once understood, will aid us in our subsequent investigations. "For the time is come," says Peter, "that judgment must begin at the house of God." Allusion evidently is here made to a "time" and "judgment," in relation to which, the author of these words had been previously instructed. A brief reference to the circumstances under which the text was uttered, will essentially aid us in arriving at the truth originally designed to be set forth. Before the introduction of Christianity into the world, man had long been groping in darkness and unbelief; he had become blinded by sin and prejudice, and wedded to long established opinions. He had received error for truth, darkness for light, and become extremely superstitious and conservative, and madly resisted the light and knowledge which

Jesus furnished for the instruction and salvation of the world.

When Jesus came to earth to bless poor, erring humanity, in the execution of his divine mission, he called to his aid a number of apostles to be co-workers with him in establishing his kingdom of grace and truth, and in spreading abroad the glorious doctrines of the new dispensation, which were hostile to the teachings of the Jews, and designed to supercede them.

Peter, the author of these words, was one whom the Savior employed to go forth in defence of his truth, and encounter the opposition which a wicked world would bestow upon the disciples of the cross. The Master clearly portrayed the difficulties with which his friends would meet in the execution of their mission. He informed them of the awful woes and terrible calamities which were about to come upon the people with whom they mingled, for their sinfulness. The Savior looked forward to the time when those temporal judgments would come upon the Jewish nation; but before Jerusalem itself was to be laid in ruins, the disciples of Christ would be persecuted, and this should be one of the signs that would precede the overthrow of that ill-fated city, over which the Savior wept. Jesus said to his disciples thus: "Then shall they deliver you up to be *afflicted*, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." Having then such a personal interest in the matter, the disciples could not easily have for-

gotten this sign. "But," says Jesus, "when they persecute you in this city, flee ye to another." See Matt. x. 22, 23; and xxiv. 9, etc.

When the disciples of Christ went forth to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God, they met with the persecution which was foretold; the wrath of a perverse generation was aroused against them; and Peter then remembers the language of the Master in relation to the signs that should precede the destruction of the Jewish nation. Jesus told them that they would be hated of all men, and be delivered up to be afflicted and killed; and that they must flee from city to city; and when the persecution foretold commenced, Peter exclaims: "The time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God," etc. As though Peter had said: "The time predicted by our Master has arrived; persecution has commenced against us; that time which Christ foretold has come." By the "judgment beginning at the house of God," reference is made to the *persecution* which the followers of Christ received.

But, is there any scriptural proof to justify the assertion, that Christians are referred to by the expression, "house of God?" Most certainly, we answer. In Hebrews iii. 6, Paul says thus: "But Christ as a Son over his own house: *whose house* are we," etc. Here faithful believers are called God's house; and it was with this "house" that judgment was to begin; or, in other words, that persecution was to commence. Again, in the 2d

chapter of Ephesians, Paul informed the brethren that they were of the "household of God." That this is the meaning of Peter, seems further evident from the language he employs, before and after the expression we are now considering. He says: "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed," etc. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin *at us*," etc. Those who were to suffer as Christians, composed the house of God; and these Peter calls "us." Persecution was to begin at the house of God. Jesus foretold that Christians would first suffer affliction, before vengeance should be taken on those who obeyed not the gospel of God. Many Christians did suffer at the hand of wicked persecutors; they were in distress and affliction, consequently the day was nigh at hand when temporal calamities and awful judgments were to come upon the "ungodly and the sinner."

We are prepared to inquire now what is meant by the expression—"If the righteous scarcely be saved?" Christians are referred to by those called "righteous," who are also mentioned by the term "us," with whom persecution was first to begin. Such, by a diligent observation of the signs which Jesus foretold should precede the destruction of the Jewish state, would be able to make their escape. The Savior told them to flee to the mountains, and when the time came they barely escaped the hand of the enemy; or, were scarcely saved.

Many learned orthodox divines have given a similar interpretation to this scripture. Dr. Macknight gives the following reading to, and comments on the passage:

"Indeed the time is come, that the punishment to be inflicted on the Jews as a nation, for their crimes from the first to last, must begin at you Jewish Christians, now become the house of God. And if it begin first at us, who are so dear to God, what will the end be of those Jews who obey not the gospel of God?

And when God thus punishes the nation, if the righteous Jews, who believe in Christ, with difficulty can be saved, where will the ungodly and sinful part of the nation show themselves saved from the divine vengeance?

That the apostle is not speaking here of the difficulty of the salvation of the righteous, at the day of judgment, will be evident to any one who considers 2 Peter i. 11..... What he speaks of, is the difficulty of the preservation of the Christians, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem; yet they were preserved; for so Christ promised. (Matt. xxiv. 13.) But the ungodly and wicked Jews were saved neither in Judea, nor any where else."

Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, says thus:

Verse 17. *Judgment must begin at the house of God.* "Our Lord had predicted that, previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, his followers would have to endure various calamities. (See Matt. xxiv. 9, 21, 22; Mark xiii. 12, 13; John xvi. 2, etc.) Here his true disciples are called *the house* or *family of God.* That the converted Jews suffered much from their own brethren, the *zealots* or *factions,*

into which the Jews were at that time divided, needs little proof, and some interpreters think that this was in conformity to the purpose of God. Matt. xxiii. 35: '*That on you may come all the righteous blood shed from the foundation of the world.*' 'That the Jewish Christians were to be involved in the general punishment; and that it was proper to begin at *them*, as a part of the devoted Jewish nation, notwithstanding they were now become the house of God; because the justice of God would, thereby, be more illustriously displayed.' (See Macknight.) But probably the word *krima*, which we here translate *judgment*, may mean no more than affliction and distress; for it was a Jewish maxim, that when God was about to pour down some general judgment, He began with afflicting his own people, in order to correct and amend them; that they might be prepared for the overflowing scourge. In *Bava Kama*, fol. 60, 1, we have the same sentiment, and in nearly the same words as in Peter, viz.: 'God never punishes the world but because of the wicked; but He always begins with the righteous first. The destroyer makes no difference between the just and the unjust; only he begins first with the righteous.' See Ezek. ix. 1–7, where God orders the destroyer to slay both old and young in the city; but, said he: '*Begin at my sanctuary.*'

And if it first begin *at us*, Jews who have repented and believe on the Son of God, *what shall be the end of them*, the Jews who continue impenitent, and *obey not the gospel of God?* Here is the plainest reference to the above Jewish maxim; and this, it appears, was founded upon the text which St. Peter immediately quotes.

Verse 18. *And if the righteous scarcely be saved.* If it shall be with *extreme difficulty* that the Chris-

tians shall escape from Jerusalem, when the Roman armies shall come against it, with the full commission to destroy it, *where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* Where shall the proud *Pharisaic boaster* in his own outside holiness, and the *profligate transgressor* of the laws of God, show themselves, as having escaped the divine vengeance? The Christians, though with difficulty, did escape every man; but not one of the Jews escaped, whether found in Jerusalem or elsewhere. * *

I have, on several occasions, shown that when Cestius Gallus came against Jerusalem, many Christians were shut up in it; when he strangely raised the siege, the Christians immediately departed to Pella, in Cœlosyria, into the dominions of King Agrippa, who was an ally of the Romans; and there they were in safety; and it appears from the ecclesiastical historians that they had but barely time to leave the city before the Romans returned under the command of Titus, and never left the place till they had destroyed the temple, razed the city to the ground, slain upwards of a million of those wretched people, and put an end to their civil polity and ecclesiastical state."

The meaning seems to be, that the Christians had barely time to make their escape, before divine judgments came upon the ungodly Jews; they were with difficulty preserved; or, were scarcely saved from those severe temporal calamities.

Where did the ungodly and wicked Jews appear? What was their condition? Lamentable beyond description. After they had persecuted the Christians, and filled up the measure of their iniquity, the judgments of God came upon them,

and they were miserably destroyed as a nation, swept away by the sword of the conqueror. Victorious armies came against them; terror was without, and pestilence within; and their noble city was laid in ruins. The *people* were visited by famine and war, and the ungodly and sinner appeared in distress, being crushed beneath the terrible judgments that were poured out upon them. Having refused to listen to Christ, they lifted the hand of rebellion against God, and were punished as a nation; banished from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power. When the severe calamities which Jesus predicted came upon them, then there was great tribulation, such as there had not been since the beginning of the world, and such as should never be again. The struggle was fearful; thousands were slain; blood ran down the streets; and when nothing more could be done in defense of their city, the inhabitants fell to slaughtering one another. The mother even ate her own child, so destitute were the people. And it was in this lamentable condition that the sinner and ungodly Jew appeared. The Christians barely escaped — were scarcely saved; but yet they were preserved, while the wicked were cut off by the judgments that came upon them. They *appeared humiliated — clothed in shame and degradation* — a by-word among the nations of the earth.

EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION.

"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you, who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."—2 THESSALONIANS i. 6–9.

That we may correctly apprehend the meaning of this much controverted passage of Scripture, it is necessary that we ascertain first of all, on whom vengeance was to be taken, and everlasting destruction visited, and then we shall be prepared to understand the nature and duration of the punishment threatened. The passage itself imparts the necessary information upon this point. Those who *troubled* the Thessalonian Christians were to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. And here we are not left in doubt, as the Scriptures are explicit upon this point. The unbelieving, wicked Jews troubled and persecuted the Christians at Thessalonica, as we learn from Acts xvii. 5, 8:

"But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the

baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And they *troubled* the people, and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things."

This was at Thessalonica, as the context informs us, and those who troubled the Christians there were the Jews who believed not, and hence it was the unbelieving, persecuting Jews that God was to recompense with tribulation, and punish with everlasting destruction. In further proof upon this point, we refer to 1 Thess. ii. 14, 15: "For ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen. ....Who have killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us."

Those were to be punished with everlasting destruction who knew not God, and obeyed not the gospel. And of the Jews, the Savior himself declared, "They have not known the Father, nor me." The Jews who madly persecuted Christ and his apostles, *troubled* and persecuted the Thessalonian Christians, and they were to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power.

This brings us to inquire *when* were the Jews to be thus punished? It was when the Lord Jesus should be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, a figurative expression, denoting severe national calamities and temporal judgments, then about to come upon the wicked, persecuting Jewish people. Christ is spoken of as coming in his kingdom at

that time, because his truth would become more permanently established in the earth, and meeting with less opposition and persecution, it would run and have free course in the earth. Proof is furnished upon this point, in the following language:

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Matt. xvi. 27, 28.

The coming of the Son of man was intimately connected with the downfall of the Jewish nation. When that old Jewish theocracy was overthrown, and all its oppressive influences uprooted and removed, then Christ came in the glory of his Father, to establish the principles of his religion; hence the expression, "There be some standing here that shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." The text before us speaks of *flaming fire*. This was highly figurative language, and the sacred penmen frequently employed that figure to set forth the judgments of God upon the wicked, to represent the downfall of nations and cities. In the 22d chapter of Ezekiel, the temporal calamities and judgments to come upon the house of Israel are spoken of under this figure, and it is said the inhabitants of Jerusalem should be blown upon with *fire*, and *melted*, as tin and iron and brass and lead are melted in the furnace. (Ezek. xxii. 18–22.) This language sim-

ply portrayed national ruin. Paul also employed similar phraseology—*flaming fire*—to represent divine judgments then about to come upon the Jewish nation for its sins.

The persecuting Jews had laid up wrath against the day of wrath, had stoned the prophets and crucified the Lord's anointed, and after they had filled up the measure of their iniquity, they were to experience the retributive justice of God. It was a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to those who troubled and persecuted the early Christians. The persecutors themselves should be overwhelmed with divine judgments and punished, and the followers of Christ should enjoy comparative freedom and rest.

What is meant here by being punished with everlasting destruction from the *presence of the Lord?* The ancient Hebrews *located* God's presence. They thought it was in some particular *place.* It is said, "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden." Gen. iv. 16. "Jonah rose up to flee into Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa." Jonah i. 3. God promised his presence to the Children of Israel, in the following language: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Exodus xxxiii. 14. God was to accompany his people with his presence, and give them prosperity and rest. God's presence was supposed to be with his people in Judea, the holy land, and especially Jerusalem,

the holy city, where was built the holy temple, and where the children of Israel enjoyed exalted favors and privileges.

When the Jews were carried into Babylonish captivity, and subject to foreign domination, and where they remained seventy years, they were said to be banished from the presence of the Lord —that is, from the holy land, and their religious privileges; they were then said to be cast away from God's presence; they were driven away from Jerusalem where his presence was supposed to dwell more especially. Hence, we are informed that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon, until the Lord cast the people *out from his presence.* (2 Kings xxiv. 20.) The Jews were driven from their sacred altars, and institutions, and were separated from all those religious associations which had been so dear to them.

But in the good providence of God, they were delivered from captivity and permitted to return again to their sacred land, to rebuild their temple and rear their altars to the Most High. They repented of their sins, and God again vouchsafed his presence unto them.

But in their prosperity they again forgot God, and became a proud, haughty and disobedient people; and again severe national judgments came upon them, greater than ever had been, or ever should be again. (Matt. xxiv. 21.) This overwhelming tribulation is called *everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord. This sinful

people were dispersed among the nations of the earth, they were again driven away from their sacred places, and nationally destroyed; and hence it was said that they were banished from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

Their destruction is called everlasting. Not that the punishment was *endless* in duration, for their former destruction which continued only seventy years, was spoken of in a similar way. Paul was addressing those who understood the meaning of such phraseology. They had read of the everlasting hills, the everlasting mountains, and the everlasting priesthood of Aaron. The land of Canaan was given to the Jews for an everlasting possession. (Gen. xvii. 8; Ex. xl. 15; Hab. iii. 6.) The statutes of Israel were called *everlasting.* (Lev. xvi. 34.) Paul employed language very similar to that which the prophet Jeremiah used in describing the overthrow of the Jewish nation.

"Therefore, behold I, even I will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you, and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence; and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame which shall not be forgotten." Jer. xxiii. 39, 40.

The Jews, as a nation, are now suffering everlasting punishment, and have been for nearly two thousand years; their civil polity has been taken from them, and their former greatness has departed, and banished from Judea and Jerusalem, where God's presence had been vouchsafed to them, they

are a reproach and a by-word among the nations of the earth. Their punishment was called *everlasting* or *age-lasting*, but not endless, for all Israel shall be saved. "For if the casting away of them [the Jews,] be the reconciling of the world, [the Gentiles,] what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead." Rom. xi. 15. And again: "Blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come; and so all Israel shall be saved." Rom. xi. 25, 26. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Rom. xi. 32.

But we may be asked, what had the church at Thessalonica to do with the destruction of the Jewish polity, and the overthrow and dispersion of the Jewish nation? How could such a distant church be sensibly affected, or gain any relief or "rest," as the text has it, by the destruction of the Jews and destroying of their power? They would gain rest by being relieved from Jewish persecution, for in almost every instance the early Christians were persecuted by the Jews who went about stirring up the people and exciting prejudice against the Christian Church. It was these wicked, persecuting Jews who troubled the Thessalonian brethren. On every hand, the Jews were engaged in a series of persecutions. They excited the rabble and stirred up mobs against the apostles and the Christian Church.

When Paul and Barnabas were on a visit to Antioch to proclaim the gospel of Christ, and the

whole city were brought together to listen to the tidings of grace and salvation, the envious Jews spoke against the things they heard, contradicting and blaspheming. (Acts xiii. 44, 45.) But the apostles proclaimed the truth yet more boldly, and the Gentiles were made glad, and glorified the word of the Lord, which was published throughout all that region.

Then the Jews stirred up the people and raised the hand of persecution against these apostles and drove them out of their coasts. (Acts xiii. 50.) These faithful servants of God then went on a missionary tour to Iconium, and through their instrumentality great multitudes of Jews and Greeks believed. "But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren." Acts xiv. 2. Then they visited Lystra, in Lyconia, to preach the gospel, but the wicked Jews from Antioch and Iconium persecuted these apostles, and Paul was so beaten and stoned, that they drew him out of the city supposing that he was dead. (Acts xiv. 19.) Again, we find Paul and Silas at Thessalonica, preaching with much success, so that many gave heed and believed. But the Jews who believed not, took certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and set the whole city in an uproar, and actually made an attack upon the house of Jason that they might lay violent hands on these apostles. (Acts xvii. 6.) They went to Berea, and their preaching excited so much attention that many believed the truth.

And when the Jews at Thessalonica heard of this, they came thither also, and stirred up the people. (Acts xvii. 13).

Thus we find that the Jews were the chief instigators of the persecution waged against the apostles. Hence, it was perfectly natural for Paul, in addressing the Thessalonian church, to refer to the divine judgments which would cripple the power of the Jews and bring rest and comparative freedom from persecution.

GILL.—"'*And to you who are troubled, rest with us:*' this is another branch of the justice of God, in rendering to them who are afflicted and persecuted for righteousness' sake, *rest;* a relaxation or rest from persecutions, for a while, at least; as the churches of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, had, from that persecution, raised at the death of Stephen, (Acts ix. 31,) and as the Christians had, at the destruction of Jerusalem; which, though it was a day of vengeance to the unbelieving Jews, were times of refreshing to the saints, who were now delivered from their persecutors."—*Expos. in loc.*

LAUGH AT YOUR CALAMITY.

"I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh."—PROVERBS i. 24–26.

This passage of Scripture has often been brought forward to support the sentiment which teaches that a large portion of the intelligent creation will be endlessly miserable. It is affirmed that the Infinite Ruler of the universe will apply the language of the text to the "finally impenitent" at the day of judgment, a class of individuals nowhere spoken of in the Word of God. It is said that the Almighty will indulge in language something like the following: "I once sought your redemption; I sent prophets and priests, and even my own beloved Son, but you heeded them not. I called and invited you to make your peace with me, but you refused. Now you must suffer eternally; you must make your bed in endless despair. I will no longer seek your happiness, nor be interested in your welfare; but I will REJOICE at your sufferings, and make sport of your misery; I will LAUGH

at your calamity, and MOCK when your fear cometh."

Thus our heavenly Father, the God whose nature is love, and who delighteth in mercy, is represented as sporting with the sufferings of his own children, delighting in their wretchedness, mocking their misery, and absolutely laughing at their calamity!

But such a view of the Divine Being is opposed to his nature, which is love, and the revealed attributes of our heavenly Father. He was moved by the benevolence of his own nature to awaken man into existence, and has created all things for his pleasure. Morning and evening testify of his goodness, and innumerable are the blessings which flow from his hand. And being immutable, He never can take pleasure in witnessing the misery of his offspring. He can never laugh at any calamity that may come upon them — never mock their sufferings. A fiend only can do that!

To apprehend rightly and clearly the meaning of the text, we must ascertain the representative being to whom the language is attributed. By looking at the context, we learn that WISDOM, personified, is represented as speaking. She invites the disobedient to walk in the ways of virtue, and warns the sinful and unrighteous of the fearful consequences of transgression, and urges and entreats them to walk in the path of uprightness — in the ways of wisdom — whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and whose paths are paths of peace.

Principles are frequently personified by the sacred penmen and represented as speaking. Nature is personified, and the floods represented as clapping their hands, and the fields as rejoicing. Evil thought is personified, and represented as holding a conversation with the Savior. In the 8th chapter of Proverbs, wisdom is personified, and stands forth in the representative character of a female, standing where the ungodly and sinful pass, and exhorting them to be of understanding hearts. So in the context, wisdom is personified thus:

"Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets; She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof."

Wisdom is still represented as speaking:

"Behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat

of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."

Wisdom, personified, admonishes man of the way of sin, and portrays the fearful consequences of disobedience. "I (Wisdom,) have called and ye refused." Who thus refused, or declined to listen to her counsel or instruction? They are denominated here the "simple ones," "fools," "scorners." They who hate knowledge, "who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness."

What were the consequences of this neglect and sin? Answer: "They shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them." It was the voice of wisdom that called to the sinful to turn from the evil way and walk in the paths of obedience and uprightness. Those who gave no heed to her instructions are called the "simple ones;" they spurned her teachings, cared not for her reproof, but passed on and were snared in the work of their own hands — suffered the fearful consequences of their disobedience and folly. The whole subject refers to the present consequences of wrong doing, the retributive justice of God in this life, without any regard to the immortal world. This is so apparent to the mind of Dr.

Adam Clarke the Methodist commentator, that he wrote as follows: "Nor can anything here be considered as applying or applicable to the eternal state of the person in question."

To walk in wisdom's ways, was to be upright, moral and just. Wisdom exhorts the sinner to flee from his iniquity, cease to do evil and learn to do well. It entreats the liar to keep his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking guile. To the intemperate man she utters fearful warnings, and exhorts all to walk in the paths of virtue, saying to the disobedient, "Turn ye at my reproof." But instead of heeding her voice and obeying her instructions, they rush into sin, and then when it is too late, they desire to escape the fearful consequences of wrong doing. But now that retribution is merited, all entreaty and effort to escape punishment are vain. Wisdom now could not avert the justice of God, nor save man from an adequate retribution, and, therefore, it appeared like mocking his suffering. When punishment was merited, vain would be the effort of the disobedient to escape it. As wisdom then could render no assistance, it would seem as though it laughed at their calamity.

Here is a man who lifts high the hand of rebellion against God and man. He scorns the counsel of the wise and virtuous. Wisdom pleads with him to listen to her voice, and walk in the testimonies of the Most High; but he tramples upon her teaching, and will none of her reproofs. But while

rushing into sin, he is arrested in his iniquity and now must suffer an adequate punishment. He seeks to escape, but in vain. He calls upon wisdom to aid him, but as punishment is deserved, she can render no assistance. She once called, but he refused to listen to her counsel and instruction, and he must now suffer for his folly and sin. Instead of affording help, it seems as though she laughed at his calamity, leaving him to suffer for his sins.

Now, the punishment is merited; the disobedient call for assistance in vain. Wisdom does not answer. Though they seek her now, they shall not find her, for they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord. Therefore, shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices, and suffer merited retribution for sin.

Wisdom now calls upon all to refrain from evil and walk uprightly; but if we sin, punishment will be merited, and all effort to escape, apparently, will be laughed at. He who is wise must be wise for himself.

SOUL AND BODY IN HELL.

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."—MATTHEW x. 28.

This language was addressed to the disciples by their Lord and Master, under peculiarly trying circumstances. One prominent object of the Savior, as we learn by the context, was to inspire confidence in God, the universal Father. Jesus labored to impress upon the disciples the necessity of fearing God more than all others — more than all earthly tribunals, magistrates, governors, councils, and malignant persecutors. God is worthy the confidence and regard of all, exhibiting a father's interest in all — even the sparrow falls not to the ground without the notice of our heavenly Father. He cares for the bird and the flower, clothes the field with grass, and paints the lily of the valley — and shall He not care for his own intelligent offspring, created in the divine image? Why, the very hairs of your head are all numbered: "Fear ye not, therefore, ye are more value than many sparrows." As though the Savior had said to the disciples, "If God, whom you are called upon to

fear, cares thus for the irrational creation, you need not distrust Him, He will care for his own children endowed with intellectual, moral and religious powers which render them akin to the Infinite Mind." Jesus did not design to fill the soul with terror and alarm, and the fear which has torment, but to lead man into a calm and sublime trust in God.

When Jesus commissioned his disciples to preach the gospel of the kingdom, he sent them out as sheep in the midst of wolves, to wrestle with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. They were surrounded by those who thirsted for their blood; hence the admonition of their Master: "Be ye therefore as wise as serpents, but harmless as doves." Preach the gospel of the kingdom faithfully, but excite no unnecessary opposition. Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and bring you before governors and kings, still have faith in God who will assist you in every emergency. Fear them not, proclaim the truth openly, conceal nothing to escape persecution; fear not them who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. Fear not those persecutors, be not intimidated and deny the truth, powerful as they are; there is a power superior to all councils and magistrates. Jesus endeavored to make his disciples feel that their strength was in God, and if they should become timid and frightened at the power which could take their lives; surely, then, on this ground they should fear God,

'or He had ability to do this, which was the utmost hat their persecutors could do — and infinitely nore. He had the power to strike the soul *psuche*) out of existence as well as the body. Iod had the ability so to destroy man that he hould not exist at all. The Being who can give xistence can withhold that existence, and annihiate man in the twinkling of an eye. He has bility to do this.

The word *psuche* is rendered "life, "soul," 'souls," "mind," "heart," and "minds." We eed not pause here to refer to the numerous pasages where it is rendered *life*. All concede that t is frequently used in the sense of animal life, or xistence on earth. It will not do, however, to end every text to this definition, as all can see by n examination of the passages where it occurs. t is rendered "minds" in Acts xiv. 2: "And nade their minds (*psuche*) evil affected against the rethren." This certainly cannot mean merely the nimal life. Again, "with one mind (*psuche*) triving together for the faith of the gospel." Phil. . 27. This cannot well be understood to mean nerely earthly existence, or animal life. Again, Paul speaks of "doing the will of God from the eart." (*psuche.*) Eph. vi. 6. Once more: "Lest e be wearied and faint in your minds." (*psuche.*) Heb. xii. 3. As this word has a variety of renderngs, so has it a variety of significations. Concedng that it frequently means life, we now remark hat it appears to be used in a much more compre-

hensive sense, and to embrace ALL of man, not merely the animal, but the moral and spiritual part of his being—the entire nature. It embraces what constitutes our personality or individualism—the whole being called MAN. It is sometimes used in the sense of *persons*, and sometimes it appears to have special reference to the moral and spiritual nature—as in Matthew xi. 29, "Learn of me.... and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (*psuche.*) Christ said, "My soul (*psuche*) is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Matt. xxvi. 38. It was his mind or spiritual nature that was exceeding sorrowful. And so when Mary rejoicingly said, "My soul (*psuche*) doth magnify the Lord," (Luke i. 46); she meant that her whole moral and spiritual nature magnified the Lord—that her affectional nature was moved and went out toward God. So we read that "fear came upon every soul," (*psuche*,) that is, upon every person. Again: "Every soul (*psuche*) which will not hear that prophet." Acts iii. 23. This means every individual. So we read of "three-score and fifteen souls," that is *persons*. "Let every soul (*psuche*) be subject unto the higher powers." Rom. xiii. 1. This means, *let* every person, etc. Again we read of the "hope we have as an anchor of the soul." (*psuche.*) Heb. vi. 19. The *soul* in this passage evidently refers to the moral and spiritual nature of man, for the christian hope could alone satisfy its wants and be its anchor.

These references are sufficiently numerous to

dicate the sense in which this word, *psuche*, ren-
ɜred soul in the passage which stands at the head
' this article, was used by the sacred penman.

Christ exhorted the disciples *not* to fear them
ho could kill the body, that is, destroy the animal
e; their persecutors could do that; but they were
ɔt able to kill the soul, hence, soul here must
ean something besides the life, or animal exist-
ce, for they certainly would take that away in
lling the body, but they were *not* able to kill the
ul. If soul here means mere animal life, then
e persecutors could destroy it, or kill it, but the
ssage asserts that they were not able to kill the
ul, though they could kill the body!

Soul here must embrace the whole man, the en-
e moral and spiritual nature, the same as when
ırist said, "Ye shall find rest to your souls," and
My soul is exceeding sorrowful." The enemies
the truth could kill the body, but could not de-
'oy the spiritual part of man, but the infinite
ɔd could destroy soul and body in *gehenna*. He
uld annihilate man. He who could awaken man
;o existence, could sweep him away forever.
ıe truth inculcated was, that God was the proper
ject of fear and trust. He was greater than all,
d should be feared above all and loved before
. Under all circumstances, and in every emer-
ncy, the disciples were to trust in God. This
ıs the great truth taught, and not that God *would*
stroy soul and body in hell, (*gehenna*).

To destroy both soul and body in hell, or *gehen-*

na, was a proverbial expression to denote complete destruction — utter extinction. "And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame; and it shall burn and devour his thorns and briars in one day; and shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body;" etc. Isa. x. 17, 18. On this passage commentators have written thus:

"The briars and thorns are the common people; the glory of his forest are the nobles, and those of highest rank and importance. See note on chap. ix. 17, and compare Ezek. xx. 47. The fire of God's wrath shall destroy them both great and small, and it shall consume them *from the soul to the flesh;* a proverbial expression; soul and body, as we say; it shall consume them entirely and altogether. And the few that escape shall be looked upon as having escaped from the most imminent danger," etc.—*Lowth.*

The foregoing note is adopted, word for word, by Clarke, who of course adds his testimony to its truth. The learned Gataker also vouches the same fact.

"Both soul and body. Heb. From the soul and unto the flesh, as Jer. ix. 10, from the fowl and unto the beast, for both fowl and beast; and Jer. l. 3, from man and beast, both man and beast. It is a proverbial speech, intimating a total destruction of his army, not unlike those of head and tail, branch and rush, (chap. ix. 14); for the prophet returns here to the former similitude of a body, (verse 16,) but he pursues it with a further amplification. It was *leanness*, or a consumption of flesh, that was there mentioned, as chap. xvii. 4, which

may yet be without loss or danger of life; but here, vitals and all are wasted and consumed, as with fire; the very *soul* and *spirit* of this vast body, together with the *fat* and *flesh* of it is utterly gone."—*Assembly's Annotations.*

"So much may suffice to show the admitted fact, that the destruction of soul and body was a proverbial phrase, indicating utter extinction or complete destruction."—*Paige.*

The persecutors of the disciples might cast them into *gehenna-fire*, or burn them in the valley of Hinnom. This was the utmost they could do; or, as Luke expresses it, "After that have no more that they can do." But God could do more, for He could cause the utter extinction of man—annihilate him even. But it does not follow that God would so exercise his power. On another occasion Jesus exhibited the power of God by saying that He is "*able* of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Matt. iii. 9. Not that God would actually exercise his power in that way, and raise up children unto Abraham from the stones of the streets, but that He was able to do this. So He was able to destroy man utterly—annihilate him. As God was greater than all, therefore He was to be feared more than all. Jesus sought to inspire confidence in God, and to have his disciples true to his cause amidst the severest trials and persecutions of life.

THE ANGELS THAT SINNED.

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."—2 PETER ii. 4.

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto judgment of the great day."—JUDE 6.

Many erroneous ideas have obtained in the Christian Church in regard to the angels here referred to by these apostles. Some have supposed that angelic beings in heaven, animated by an unholy ambition and a sinful spirit, actually rebelled against Almighty God; a war on the heavenly plains ensued, and after a severe contest the rebellious spirits in heaven were conquered and hurled from their former exalted state of purity and bliss, and consigned to the regions of dark despair! It is also believed that the "commander-in-chief" of these rebellious forces will ultimately drag down to the regions of dark despair a large portion of the human race, and torment them endlessly. These views, so dark and dismal, and so unworthy an infinitely wise and good God, we cannot accept; and therefore seek an interpretation that will be more rational and more in harmony with the na-

ture and perfections of Almighty God. In our present investigations we should bear in mind the following considerations:

1. The Old and New Testament Scriptures are entirely silent in regard to a battle having ever been fought in heaven, as the theology of the sacrificial church affirms. We do not find the least proof that holy angels in heaven sinned against their Maker, and were thrust down to an endless hell! We are not informed that the angels here alluded to were ever in heaven. We read, "And if God spared not the angels that sinned," etc., but this passage does not inform us that they were ever in heaven. The angels sinned, but not in the region of eternal bliss, as many suppose.

The passage in Jude affirms that the angels kept not their *first estate*, but left their own habitation; but it does not say that heaven was their first estate, nor that the habitation they left was immortal felicity. Not the slightest hint is given in the Old Testament of a war among the celestial inhabitants. If such a rebellion ever took place in heaven, it is fair to presume that some record would have been made of such an important event. The absence of such a record is strong presumptive evidence that no such event ever occurred.

2. The prevailing doctrine concerning angels sinning in heaven is utterly and irreconcilably opposed to the Scriptures which speak of the *purity*, *holiness*, and *bliss* of the heavenly state. Heaven is spoken of as a state of happiness and purity.

No unclean thing shall go up there; but the redeemed shall walk there. We cannot think that the heavenly state was ever turned into a great battle field; and that really there was a war in heaven, a war in the realms of everlasting purity and love! According to this idea, sin originated in heaven among the pure and holy angels! Such a sentiment is too absurd to require any labored refutation.

3. If heaven was once converted into a battle field, and there really was open hostility in the abodes of bliss, may there not be another war in heaven? If pure and holy angels could once sin in heaven, may they not again and again? What security have we against another insurrection?

These considerations indicate the absurdity of the prevailing sentiment concerning fallen angels; and we now pass to give what we regard as a more rational view of the subject.

In the Scriptures, human beings are often called angels. Angel signifies *messenger;* and a person employed in the character of a messenger is called an angel. Solomon says that "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief." Prov. xiii. 17. In the Hebrew, it is *angel.* The prophet Malachi calls the priest a messenger of the Lord, i. e., an angel of the Lord.

Again: "When the messengers of John were departed," etc. Luke vii. 24. The original word translated in this passage "messenger," is *angelos,* and is elsewhere rendered "angels," and is the

same word as is rendered angels in 2 Peter ii. 4 and Jude 6.

When Jesus was on earth, he "sent messengers before his face; and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him." Luke ix. 52. The original word here rendered "messengers," is *angelos*.

Ministers were called angels, as follows: "The angels of the seven churches." Rev. i. 20. That is, the ministers of those churches. "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus." Rev. ii. 1. "Unto the angel of the church in Smyrna." Rev. ii. 8. "To the angel of the church in Pergamos." Rev. ii. 12. "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write." Rev. ii. 18. In all these passages, reference is made to those who presided over those churches. This term was applied to human, as well as celestial beings.

There is such a striking similarity between the language of Jude and Peter, that many learned divines have regarded them as referring to the same events. Peter alludes to certain false teachers, who privily brought in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, while Jude speaks of certain men that crept in unawares, denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Both speak of the angels that sinned, of the destruction of the antediluvian world, and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. Peter was speaking of the condemnation and punishment which would come upon certain false teachers who

were then in their midst. They would bring upon themselves swift destruction. This language was penned a short time before the destruction of Jerusalem, and at a time when there was great commotion in the land; hence he speaks of the judgments soon to come upon them as lingering not, and their damnation, or condemnation, as slumbering not.

To impress these truths more deeply upon the mind, the apostle refers to severe temporal judgments which came upon the sinful and disobedient in former times; and hence those false teachers should not think of escaping merited punishment —the antediluvian world had been swept away by a flood, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by divine judgments, and these false teachers could not escape. They were soon to meet with overwhelming destruction. In past times, God had punished the sinful, and would always hold the disobedient accountable.

The apostle enforced his teachings by historical allusions, and his examples are all scriptural, except the reference to the angels that were cast down to hell (*tartarus.*) This, too, was clearly a historical allusion, with which the people must have been familiar, or else no important truth would have been conveyed to their minds. As there is no record of such an event in the Old Testament, the only sacred writings then extant, it must have been recorded in another book.

It is proper to observe here that a tradition ex-

isted among the Jews, previous to the birth of Christ, that the "sons of God," mentioned in Genesis vi. 2, were *angels*, who, previous to the flood, fell in love with the daughters of men, and left their high and lofty stations in the skies, to dwell with beautiful women on earth. According to the tradition, God destroyed them all with a flood for their sinfulness. It is evident that such a *tradition* prevailed among the Jews, as it is referred to by Josephus, the ancient Jewish historian, although we know not with whom it originated. Josephus refers to this tradition in the following language:

"For many angels of God accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength; for the tradition is, that the men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians called giants."—*Antiquities, Book I, Chap.* 3.

In a note Josephus adds the following: "This *notion* that the fallen angels were, in some sense, the fathers of the old giants, was the constant opinion of antiquity."

An extended account of this *tradition* is found in the "Book of Enoch,"[1] a work written probably by some Jew before the Christian era, as it is frequently referred to by the early Christian fathers, and undoubtedly Peter and Jude referred to this

[1]For the quotations made from this "Book of Enoch," we are indebted to an able article in the *Universalist Quarterly*, from the pen of Rev. Dr. Sawyer, who gives several quotations from the work.

tradition, recorded in this book, as there is a striking similarity between their language and the language of this book.

We ask the reader's attention to the following extract from the learned article before alluded to in the *Quarterly*, in connection with the extracts from the Book of Enoch, made by the author of that paper:

"Respecting the age of this remarkable book, there is little diversity of opinion. Dr. Lawrence and Dr. Hoffman agree in dating its composition at thirty or forty years before Christ; that is, in the early part of the reign of Herod. Professor Stuart says it must have been written subsequent to Herod's reign; and Professor Luecke, of Gottingen, sets it down as having been composed subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem; in which opinion substantially agrees Professor Nitzsch, of Bonn. But whether they date it thus earlier or later, they all agree, I believe, in the opinion that it was written before the epistle of St. Jude. Nay, further, it is generally believed that this apostle actually quoted from the Book of Enoch.[1] Not only the moderns are forced to this opinion, but it seems to have been universally adopted by the ancients. 'Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Anatolius (Alexand.) and Hilary,' says Professor Stuart, 'all of whom refer to the book before us, and quote from it, say nothing which goes to establish the idea that any Christians of their day denied

[1]Jude, verses 14, 15. The passage in the "Book of Enoch" reads thus: "Behold, he comes with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon them, and destroy the wicked, and reprove all the carnal for every thing which the sinful and ungodly have done and committed against him."

or doubted that a quotation was made by the apostle Jude from the Book of Enoch. Several, and in fact, most of these writers do, indeed, call in question the *canonical* rank or authority of the Book of Enoch; but the apologies which they make for the quotation of it in Jude, show that the quotation itself was, as a matter of fact, generally conceded among them.' There are, it is true, some individuals who still doubt whether Jude quoted the Book of Enoch; but while as Professor Stuart suggests, this doubt is incapable of being confirmed by any satisfactory proof, it avails nothing to deny the quotation; for it is evident if Jude did not quote the Book of Enoch, he did quote a tradition of no better authority.

But the most remarkable feature of the Book of Enoch is, that it contains a particular account of the fall of the angels, and if I am not greatly deceived, the identical history of this astonishing event to which both Peter and Jude refer. To exhibit this reference in its true light, it will be necessary to present an outline of the history as we find it in this book, introducing such passages in full as bear most directly on the point before us. It will be seen that the whole story is made to rest on the interpretation before mentioned, of Genesis vi. 1–4. The history relating to our subject begins with chapter vii., thus: 'It happened after the sons of men had multiplied in those days, that daughters were born unto them, elegant and beautiful. And when the angels, the sons of heaven, beheld them, they became enamored of them, saying to each other: Come, let us select for ourselves wives from the progeny of men, and let us beget children. Then their leader, Samyaza, said to them: I fear that you may, perhaps, be indisposed to the performance of this enterprise; and that I

alone shall suffer for so grievous a crime. But they answered him and said: We all swear, and bind ourselves by mutual execrations, that we will not change our intentions, but execute our projected undertaking. Then they swore all together, and all bound themselves by mutual execrations. Their whole number was two hundred, who descended upon Ardis, which is the top of Mount Armon.' Here follow the names of their chiefs or prefects, eighteen in number, of whom Samyaza was their leader.

Chapter viii. gives an account of what these angels taught men—such as making swords, knives, mirrors, the use of paints, and of precious stones, sorcery, astrology, signs, astronomy, etc., etc.; and adds that 'impiety increased; fornication multiplied; and they transgressed and corrupted all their ways.' Chapter ix. informs us how the angels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Suryal, and Uriel looked down from heaven, and seeing what was done, they offered a sort of an address to the Almighty, setting forth the conduct of the sinning angels, and the misery brought upon the human race by it. Chapter x. carries forward the story thus:

'Then the Most High, the Great and Holy One spoke; and sent Arsayalalyur to the son of Lamech, saying: Say to him in my name, Conceal thyself. Then explain to him the consummation which is about to take place; for all the earth shall perish; the waters of a deluge shall come over the whole earth, and all things which are in it shall be destroyed. And now teach him how he may escape, and how his seed may remain in all the earth. Again the Lord said to Raphael: Bind Azazyel hand and foot; cast him into darkness; and opening the desert which is in Dudael, cast him in

there. Throw upon him hurled and pointed stones, covering him with darkness. There shall he remain forever; cover his face, that he may not see the light. And in the great day of judgment let him be cast into the fire.' Gabriel was sent to destroy 'the children of fornication' from among men, by exciting them one against another that they might perish by mutual slaughter. 'To Michael likewise the Lord said, Go and announce his crime to Samyaza, and to the others who are with him who have been associated with women, that they might be polluted with all their impurity. And when all their sons shall be slain, when they shall see the perdition of their beloved, bind them for seventy generations underneath the earth, even to the day of judgment, and of consummation, until the effect of which shall last forever be completed.'

The latter part of the chapter gives a very glowing description of the blessing which was afterward to be granted to the earth. The saints were to live, to have 'a thousand children;' the earth was to be 'wholly planted with trees and filled with benediction;' every seed planted was to produce a thousand fold, and one measure of olives was to produce 'ten presses of oil.' Chapter xi. informs us that before all these things Enoch was concealed, none of the sons of men knowing where he was, for he was wholly engaged with the holy ones and the watchers in his days. The story goes on:

'I, Enoch, was blessing the Great Lord and King of Peace. And behold the watchers called me Enoch the scribe. Then the Lord said to me, Enoch, scribe of righteousness, go tell the watchers of heaven who have deserted the lofty sky, and their holy everlasting station, who have been polluted with women; and have done as the sons of

men do, by taking to themselves wives, and who have been greatly corrupted on the earth; that on the earth they shall not obtain peace nor remission of sin,' etc. Chapter xiii.: 'Then Enoch passing on, said to Azazyel, Thou shalt not obtain peace. A great sentence is gone forth against thee. He shall bind thee; neither shall relief, mercy, and supplication be thine, on account of the oppression which thou hast taught; and on account of every act of blasphemy, tyranny, and sin which thou hast discovered to the children of men. Then departing from him, I spoke to them all together; and they all became terrified and trembled; beseeching me to write for them a memorial of supplication, that they might obtain forgiveness; and that I might make the memorial of their prayer ascend up before the God of heaven; because they could not themselves thenceforward address Him, nor raise up their eyes to heaven on account of their disgraceful offense for which they were judged.'

This Enoch undertook, and after writing the memorial of their prayer, he fell asleep and saw a vision of punishment, that he might relate it to the sons of heaven, and reprove them. Chapter xiv. contains what he said to them, the sum of which was, that they should never ascend into heaven, but that God would bind them as long as the world endures. The latter part of the chapter is occupied with an account of the vision, at the close of which the Lord said to him:

'Go, say to the watchers of heaven who have sent thee to pray for them: You ought to pray for men, and not men for you. Wherefore have you forsaken the lofty and holy heaven, which endures forever, and have lain with women; have defiled yourselves with the daughters of men; have taken

to yourselves wives; have acted like the sons of earth, and have begotten an impious offspring?"

We desire now to call the attention of the reader to a few particulars indicating the striking similarity between this traditional account of the fallen angels, found in the Book of Enoch, and the Biblical account, as set forth by Peter and Jude.

1. The passage in Jude informs us that "the angels *kept not their first estate.*" In the Book of Enoch, these angels are called "watchers," probably from the fact that they were supposed to have some charge of others. Being in love with the daughters of men, as the story goes, they left their high and lofty positions, and became sinful and degraded. In this immediate connection, we again call the reader's attention to the 11th chapter of this Book of Enoch, which reads as follows: "Then the Lord said to me, Enoch, scribe of righteousness, go tell the watchers of heaven, who have deserted the lofty sky, and their holy, *everlasting station*," etc. The "watchers" are here represented as leaving their "everlasting station." This corresponds very nearly to Jude's account, who undoubtedly was familiar with this tradition recorded in this Book of Enoch, as he employs very similar phraseology. Peter says that God spared not the angels that sinned. They became sinful. This agrees with the tradition of Enoch, which informs us that "impiety increased and they transgressed and corrupted all their ways."

2. Jude informs us that the angels *left their own*

habitation. He does not say that they were thrust out of heaven, by a superior power, as the theology of the sacrificial church teaches, but he speaks as though their act of leaving was voluntary — that they left of their own choice. By comparing this with the tradition of which we speak, we shall find such a remarkable coincidence of thought and expression, that it will appear evident, we think, to every reflecting mind, that each refers to the same thing. In the 11th and 14th chapters of the Book of Enoch, we are informed that the watchers of heaven *deserted the lofty sky* and forsook the lofty and holy heaven which endures forever. They are represented as acting perfectly *free* in deserting the lofty sky. There is a remarkable similarity in the accounts. Jude says that they "left their own habitation," while the tradition teaches that they "forsook the lofty sky."

3. These angels that left their own habitation, were kept in *chains of darkness*, reserved unto judgment, or, unto the judgment of the great day, as Jude has it. Similar phraseology is found in the Book of Enoch, which contains this tradition; in fact, almost the identical language is employed! In the tenth chapter, we read thus: "Again the Lord said to Raphael: Bind Azazyel hand and foot; *cast him into darkness;* and opening the desert, which is in Dudael, cast him in there. Throw upon him hurled and pointed stones, covering him with darkness. There shall he remain forever; cover his face, that he may not see the light. And

in the great day of judgment, let him be cast into the fire." They were to be bound there for "seventy generations underneath the earth," according to the tradition, "even to the *day of judgment.*" This is the same as being bound in "everlasting chains, reserved unto judgment." Being bound for "seventy generations" *underneath* the earth, is the same as being cast down to *tartarus*—hell, as spoken of by Peter.

We regard this as a correct exposition of the Biblical account of fallen angels. Many believed the tradition to be true, and hence it was very naturally referred to by way of illustration. If such were punished as those believed who accepted the tradition, then they should expect that God would deal justly with *all* offenders, and punish the false teachers of that age, as He had before punished the wicked and disobedient. The object of the apostle was to show that those false teachers should experience merited retribution, and not to endorse the tradition of the fallen angels, recorded in the apocryphal Book of Enoch, which probably had its origin in heathen mythology. Peter does not say that the history to which he refers is true; but made reference to it to illustrate a particular point and enforce an important truth, just as the Savior referred to Mammon, the god of riches, to illustrate an important truth. When Jesus said, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," (Matt. vi. 24,) he did not design to teach the existence of such a god, although the people once worshiped the god of

wealth under this name. Neither did Peter design to teach that the apocryphal account of the fallen angels was correct; but many accepted the tradition as true, and *if* what they accepted was correct, the false teachers of that day should take warning, as the disobedient would certainly be punished, as they themselves acknowledged. IF, as they believed, certain angels who sinned, met with merited retribution, how could they expect to escape?

Peter could appropriately make an appeal to those who believed the story; "For IF God spared not the angels that sinned, (as those around him professed to believe,) but cast them down to *tartarus*," etc. On the supposition that this is so, and that they are bound in everlasting chains, why then you, false teachers, need not expect to escape the just judgments of heaven.

We think that Peter made a quotation from the Book of Enoch, just as Joshua quoted from the apocryphal Book of Jasher, in his account of the standing still of the sun and moon. After saying that the sun stood still, and the moon stayed until the people avenged themselves upon their enemies, he asks the following question: "Is not this written in the Book of Jasher?" Joshua x. 13. No one supposes that Joshua designed to vouch for the correctness of the Book of Jasher, neither did Peter intend to vouch for the correctness of the story concerning the "fallen angels," as recorded in the Book of Enoch.

The writers of the Scriptures occasionally made

quotations from ancient works to illustrate important truths. In Jeremiah xlviii. 45, we read as follows: "But a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon." Dr. Adam Clarke says, that "Jeremiah has borrowed this part of his discourse *from an ancient poet*, quoted by Moses." No one supposes that because Jeremiah and Moses quoted from an "ancient poet," that they necessarily regard that poet as infallible. So Peter referred to the tradition recorded in an ancient book, without intending to affirm its truthfulness. True, Peter does not say in so many words that he quoted from the Book of Enoch; neither did Jeremiah say in so many words that he quoted from an "ancient poet," as Dr. Clarke contends; but the phraseology which Peter employs corresponds so exactly with that found in the tradition of Enoch, that we cannot doubt his acquaintance with that work. He addressed those who believed the tradition; and with propriety he could refer to it by way of illustration. As though he had said, "If God spared not the angels, as you believe, but reserved them unto judgment, then you should take warning from God's dealing with them as you profess to believe, and not think that you can escape the judgments of heaven, which will soon be upon you, false teachers." The main purpose of the apostle was not to teach any thing concerning the fallen angels, but to impress the certainty of merited retribution upon the minds of the false teachers about him.

DIE IN YOUR SINS.

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come."—JOHN viii. 21.

This passage is often incorrectly quoted thus—"If ye die in your sins, ye can never go where God and Christ are," and is supposed to teach the doctrine that all who die in their sins can never enter the abodes of eternal felicity.

According to this sentiment, the man who has long lived a true life—been exercised by kind and benevolent emotions, governed by high-toned moral principle, and been interested in the welfare of humanity, if he should die while committing a single offence in his old age, he must be endlessly miserable. And such, too, must be the melancholy fate of a child that dies in the commission of its first sin, however trivial may be its error.

Again: if *all* are to suffer eternally who die sinners, who then can be saved? All are imperfect and sinful, and pass from earth more or less contaminated with sin; and the advocate of the eternity of suffering does not believe that death has any renovating power upon the soul, that it deliv-

ers man from any moral impurity. Then, as all die more or less sinful, all must eternally perish, for it is contended that the passage under consideration teaches that all who die in their sins can never be saved!

Again: if the language employed here was originally designed to exclude the individuals addressed from heaven, then Christ's own disciples can never reach the shores of a blessed immortality, for he employed similar phraseology when addressing them; and if it teaches the endless destruction of the Jews, with equal propriety we may say that it teaches the eternal damnation of the disciples.

Jesus said, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and, as I said unto the Jews, whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." John xiii. 33. In the passage before us, Jesus said to the Jews, "Whither I go, ye cannot come." John vii. 34. And to his own beloved disciples, called by the endearing name of "little children," Jesus said, "As I said to the Jews, so say I to *you*, whither I go, *ye cannot come*." Here Jesus employed precisely the same language when addressing his followers as when speaking to the Jews, and consequently if it excludes the Jews from heaven, it will also the disciples.

Does the objector affirm that Christ did not say that the disciples should die in their sins as he did to the Jews. This we readily concede, for the obvious reason that they believed on him; but he did

say to them, "*Whither I go ye cannot come;*" and it is this expression, as is contended, that shows they can never reach the world of blessedness. It is said that Christ went to heaven, and the expression, "Whither I go, ye cannot come," excluded the Jews from the heavenly state; but if so, it would exclude the disciples also, for the same language was applied to them.

But replies the objector, the promise was made to the disciples that they should follow him *afterwards;* and when he said to them, "Whither I go, ye cannot come," he intended to say simply that they could not follow him at that particular time, but at a subsequent period should follow him, and there is no such promise to the Jews. In reply, we would say, that Jesus says to the disciple Peter, "Whither I go, *thou* canst not follow me now, but *thou* shalt follow me *afterwards.*" This language was addressed to but *one* disciple, and not to *all;* hence it follows, to use the argument of the objector, that if the Jews cannot be saved, because there is no promise to them that they should follow him afterward, then the other disciples must be excluded from the heavenly kingdom, for the promise is made to but one, viz., Peter. But there is a promise to the Jews: the time is to come when they shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." "And so all Israel shall be saved." And this time was *after* their house was to be left unto them desolate.

The scripture we are considering, was originally

addressed to the Jews, who rejected Christ and pronounced him an impostor. We think the Savior referred to some particular sin in the passage before us. And some contend that a better rendering of the original would be—"Ye shall die in your *sin*," instead of "*sins*." The sin of rejecting him seems to us to be the particular sin referred to. The Jews rejected Jesus, pronounced him an impostor, and hung him upon a cross. The context shows that this rejection of the Savior was the sin spoken of. Jesus said to the Jews, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." The Jews would not believe that Jesus was the true Christ; they rejected him and the evidence he presented that God was with him.

In John xv., we find the following language of the Savior: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin;" that is, they would not have committed the particular sin of rejecting him, had he not come and spoken unto them, though they would have been guilty in other particulars. "If ye *believe not* that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." The Jews *believed not;* they rejected him. Jesus came to his own and they received him not. "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way; ye shall seek me, and shall not find me." As much as to say: "Now you have an opportuni-

ty to seek me; to become acquainted with my doctrine and religion; I am the Messiah of the prophets, but I cannot remain here forever; I have an important mission to perform, by my life and my death; I have wrought miracles before you, but you believe not that I am the Christ of God; I cannot remain long with you; you are stubborn and unbelieving; I go my way, and the time will come when you will seek me, and desire an acquaintance with me, but I cannot remain till it arrives; you will continue to look for the Messiah of the prophets, and though now he is before you, still you believe not; but the time will come when you will be convinced that I am he; but at that time I shall not be with you. Then you will say, 'Lord, Lord, open unto us.' You will seek me and will not find me; that is, you will keep looking for the true Messiah, and will not find him." The Jews rejected Jesus and died in their sins. His language—"Whither I go, ye cannot come," could not have been designed to exclude them from heaven, for similar phraseology he employed when he addressed his disciples. He simply meant that they could not follow him at that time. *Then* was the time to seek an acquaintance with him, for he was going where they could not follow him when they should desire it. The promise is extended even to the Jews, for God hath concluded all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all. (Rom. xi. 32).

SHALL NOT SEE LIFE.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—JOHN iii. 36.

In this passage, a statement is made of the consequences of belief and unbelief in the present life, without any reference to the immortal state of existence. It indicates no permanent condition of the moral *status* of the believer or unbeliever. It does not say that he who believeth not on the Son now, shall *never* see life; for the Scriptures teach that the unbeliever may "see life" when he believes, and professed Christians of all names accept this sentiment. They urge unbelievers to accept Christ, believe on him and find life. The passage simply points out the effects of belief and unbelief. The believer *hath* everlasting life only as long as he is a believer; if he shall abandon his faith and again become an *unbeliever*, he no longer has life; but whenever he believes again on the Son, he finds life. And though it is said that he who believeth not on the Son, shall not see life, which is true as long as a man remains in unbelief, yet when he believes on Christ, he sees life, he enjoys everlasting life.

Peter was in the enjoyment of everlasting life as long as he believed on the Son; but when he denied his Master, and began to curse and swear, he did not see life—did not enjoy everlasting life; but when he repented, he again found life. Saul, breathing out threatening and slaughter against the Christians, did not see life; but when he believed on the Son, he was in possession of everlasting life. The text does not imply that the unbeliever cannot become a believer and find life, because Paul and all the disciples and apostles were *once* unbelievers, and had not life; but they believed, and then had everlasting life. So with all professed Christians; they were once unbelievers, and had not life, but through belief of the truth they came into possession of everlasting life.

But, says the objector, the passage means that he who believes not on Christ in this world, shall never see life in the future world! This is plainly adding to the text; and we deny that it has any such meaning. As the passage contains no such language, the presumption is, that it was not designed to teach any such sentiment. Had this been its meaning, it undoubtedly would have been distinctly stated! It simply says that he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God *abideth on him*—not *shall* abide on him in eternity, but abideth on him while in unbelief. So when a man becomes a believer, no wrath abideth on him. The wrath ceases when unbelief ceases.

Belief and unbelief, with their natural and legitimate consequences, are placed in opposition to each other. He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life. Belief brings him in possession of it *now*. The enjoyment of everlasting life is the present reward of belief. The condition of the unbeliever is exactly opposite that of the believed. While in unbelief, he is without this life. It comes through faith, and cannot be enjoyed in unbelief. As a legitimate punishment, the wrath of God abideth on him, but only while an unbeliever. When he *believes* on the Son, he is delivered from the consequences of unbelief. The life which the unbeliever cannot see, is the everlasting life which the believer enjoys. Their conditions are opposite. But no intimation is given that they will remain opposite through eternity. The unbeliever of to-day may be a believer to-morrow, and then the expression, "shall not see life," has no farther application to him. But becoming a believer, he *has* everlasting life, and the wrath of God no longer abides on him.

In the Bible, the terms "life" and "death" frequently refer to the moral and spiritual condition of mankind. A state of moral darkness, blindness, unbelief, and sin, is spoken of as a state of death. So on the other hand, a state of mental and spiritual illumination, christian faith and obedience, is spoken of as a state of life and peace. "You hath he quickened who were *dead* in trespasses and in sins." Eph. ii. 1. The believer on earth is repre-

sented as having "passed from death unto life.' John v. 24. Again: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John iii. 13. "To be carnally minded is *death*, but to be spiritually minded is *life* and peace." Rom. viii. 6. Death represents a state of unbelief and sin, and life represents a state of belief and spiritual culture. And both of these conditions are experienced in this world. Passing from death unto life, in Scripture phraseology, is passing from a state of moral darkness and sin, into the light of truth and the paths of obedience.

He that believeth on the Son, *hath life*—he has moral and spiritual life, the peace of God that passeth knowledge, joy unspeakable and full of glory. While he that believeth not the Son, has no such sweet peace, no rest, for he has not the light of life. While in unbelief, he is destitute of life. As long as a man continues in unbelief he shall not see life. But the wrath of God abideth on him.

This term "wrath," when applied to God, is not to be understood as indicating any revengeful emotion, or unholy passion on the part of our heavenly Father. The sacred writers not unfrequently speak of the anger of God, and the wrath of God, and vengeance of the Lord. We certainly should give to such expressions an interpretation which will not oppose the sublime truth that "God is love." If He is a God of infinite love, then He is not moved by passion, and anger, and hate, and wrath. "Anger," we read, "resteth in the bo-

soms of fools," it can find no lodgment therefore in the bosom of our heavenly Father. If God were angry as men are angry, why should He condemn anger in man? Man in that case would be like his God. We totally misapprehend God, when we attribute to Him such bad passions.

All such language is employed in a metaphorical sense, to indicate God's disapprobation of sin and the punishment inflicted on the transgressor. God could reveal Himself to man only through language adapted to human comprehension. To exhibit the personality of God, He is spoken of sometimes as a man, with the physical organism of man, with eyes, ears, hands and feet. He is also represented as walking, and riding, and resting. All such expressions are metaphorical and cannot be understood literally. So when God is spoken of as having the passions of man, and as being moved by anger and wrath, the language is metaphorically used, or as Professor Stuart says, *anthropapathic*, that is, after the manner of men. It is used to represent God's disapproval of iniquity and the punishment He inflicts for transgression. Hence we have such language as this: "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in mine hand is mine indignation." Isa. x. 5. The Assyrian army is represented as the rod of his anger, and the staff in their hand is *God's indignation*. Such language being brought down to human comprehension, is not to be interpreted literally. But speaking after the manner of men, God is said to be

angry, and as having the passions of man, the same as He is represented as having human organization, eyes, feet, and arms.

In Professor Stuart's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, we find the following valuable reflections on this subject:

"It is impossible to unite, with the idea of complete perfection, the idea of anger in the sense in which we cherish that passion; for with us it is a source of misery as well as sin. To neither of these effects of anger, can we properly suppose the Divine Being to be exposed. His anger then can be only that feeling or affection in Him, which moves Him to look on sin with disapprobation, and to punish it when connected with impenitence. We must not, even in imagination, connect this in the remotest manner with *revenge;* which is only and always a *malignant* passion. But vengeance even among men, is seldom sought for against those whom we know to be perfectly impotent, in respect to thwarting any of our designs and purposes. Now, as all men, and all creation, can never endanger any one interest (if I may so speak,) of the Divine Being, or defeat a single purpose; so we cannot even imagine a motive for revenge on ordinary grounds. Still less can we suppose the case to be of this nature, when we reflect that God is infinite in wisdom, power and goodness. This constrains us to understand the anger and indignation of God as *anthropapathic*, i. e., speaking of God after the manner of men. It would be quite as well (nay, much better) to say that when the Bible attributes hands, eyes, arm, etc., to God, the words which it employs should be literally understood, as to say that when it attributes *anger* and *vengeance* to Him, it is to be literally understood. But if we

so construe the Scriptures in this latter case, we represent God as a malignant Being, and class Him among the demons; whereas by attributing to Him hands, eyes, etc., we only represent Him to be like men."

When it is therefore said that the "wrath" of God abideth on the unbeliever, we must not give to this language an interpretation which will lead us to suppose that our heavenly Father gives way to angry passions, or is influenced by wrathful emotions. Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, thinks that the original word, (*orgee*) here rendered *wrath*, would be better expressed by the word *punishment*. He says:

"Taken in this sense, we may consider the phrase as a Hebraism: *punishment of God*, i. e., the most heavy and awful of all punishments; such as sin deserves, and such as it becomes divine justice to inflict. And this *abideth on him*, (the unbeliever) endures as long as his unbelief and disobedience remain."

The divine *punishment*, according to this eminent divine, would remain on the unbeliever, "as long as his unbelief and disobedience remain." This, certainly, does not teach *endless* punishment, for, as already remarked, the unbeliever of to-day may be a believer to-morrow. All who now believe on Christ were once unbelievers. If it could be shown that any portion of the human race would remain in *endless unbelief*, then endless punishment would follow! But this cannot be shown. To say that all will be endlessly punished who do

not believe on Christ in this world, is to condemn millions of poor heathen for not believing on one whom they have never heard! Will God sweep all those myriads of human souls down to perdition for not believing on Christ, when they never heard his name? Are they to be endlessly punished for not believing on the Savior, when they never had an opportunity to accept him? God, our heavenly Father, never can deal so cruelly with his offspring.

The Scriptures teach an entirely different sentiment. "God hath concluded them all [Jews and Gentiles] in unbelief, that He might have MERCY UPON ALL." Rom. xi. 32. "What if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith [faithfulness] of God without effect? God forbid." Rom. iii. 3, 4. In view of these teachings, the objector has no right to *assume* that a portion of mankind will remain eternally in unbelief; for God will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. ii. 4. Said Christ, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John xii. 32. When *all men* are drawn to Christ, and brought to the knowledge of the truth, there will be no unbelievers. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 10, 11.) And it shall not be said, "know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Heb. viii. 11.

WHEAT AND CHAFF.

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.....Whose fan is in his hand, and He will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."—MATTHEW iii. 10–12.

"Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."—MATTHEW vii. 19.

"And also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.....Whose fan is in his hand, and He will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into the garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable."—LUKE iii. 9–17.

These passages, so closely connected, having reference to the same subject, may appropriately be examined together. We hardly need say, that they have been frequently urged in support of the doctrine of endless punishment. But there is no evidence to believe that John made any allusion to the condition of man in the immortal state of existence. He had reference entirely to events about to transpire about the time he wrote. He had noticed the presence of the Pharisees and Saducees who had attended his ministrations on the banks of the Jordan, and desired to know who had warned them to flee from the wrath *about* to come, or from impending judgments. He knew well

that a fearful calamity was about to overtake the Jewish nation, that the people were again to be punished for their iniquity, and suffer a second destruction — which was their *second death* — and that they were to be driven again from the presence of the Lord, or from Jerusalem, and the temple, where they supposed the presence of the Lord dwelt in some peculiar sense. They had been a highly favored people, the depositories of God's truth, and had enjoyed many exalted favors; but they became proud and sinful, and forgot the God who blessed them, disregarded his commands and misimproved their opportunities, and plunged into iniquity. They filled up the measure of their iniquity by persecuting the prophets, and crucifying the Son of God, and putting him to an open shame.

At the time John made his appearance, God was about to deal with them for their sin, and inflict upon them an adequate punishment, which might warn the nations of the earth, that they could not sin with impunity. The axe was laid at the root of the tree, and those who bore not good fruit, were to be hewn down and cast into the fire; the threshing floor was to be thoroughly purged, and while the wheat was to be gathered into the garner, the chaff was to be burned with unquenchable fire. This language, which was highly figurative, referred to the severe national judgments about to come upon this ungodly nation.

John employed this bold, figurative, oriental

style of speech, because it was familiar to the Jewish people, and they, knowing how such language was used in their sacred Scriptures, could not fail to understand him. The "trees" represent the Jewish people, and the "axe" was the Roman power, or instrument of their destruction. And by the axe being laid unto the root of the trees, we understand him to mean, that the national judgments were nigh at hand, and punishment was soon to be visited upon the sinful house of Israel. It was quite common among the Jews, to represent the destruction of cities and nations, by the cutting down of trees. Hence, we read in Isaiah xl. 34, 34, as follows:

"Behold the Lord, the Lord of hosts shall lop the bough with terror; and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled. And he shall cut down the thickest of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one."

The prophet Jeremiah speaks of the conquest of Egpyt thus:

"The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; for they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood. They shall cut down her forest, saith the Lord, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than the grasshoppers, and are innumerable." Jer. x. 22, 23.

Fire, too, was a very common emblem to represent national destruction.

"For thus saith the Lord unto the king's house of Judah: Thou art Gilead unto me, and the head

of Lebanon: yet surely I will make thee a wilderness, and cities which are not inhabited. And I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons: and they shall cut down thy choice cedars, and cast them into the fire. And many nations shall pass by the city, and they shall say every man to his neighbor, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great city?" Jer. xxii. 6, 7, 8.

See also Numbers xxi. 28; Psalms xcvii. 3.

This explanation is so evident, that it is supported by some very learned orthodox commentators, even against their religious prejudices and early education.

"We risk little in referring this to the Roman power and armies, which, as an axe, most vehemently cut away the very existence of the Jewish polity and state."—*Calmet.*

"By the axe being now laid to the root of the tree, may fitly be understood; first, the certainty of their desolation; and second, the nearness, in that the instrument of their destruction was already prepared, and brought close to them; the Romans that should ruin their city and nation, being already masters and rulers over them."—*Lightfoot.*

"It was customary with the prophets to represent the kingdoms, nations and individuals whose ruin they predicted, under the notion of forests and trees, doomed to be cut down. See Jer. xlvi. 22, 23; Ezek. xxxi. 3–11, 12. The Baptist follows the same metaphor. The Jewish nation is the *tree*, and the Romans the *axe*, which, by the just judgment of God, was speedily to cut it down."—*Dr. Adam Clarke.*

In the 12th verse, reference is made to the ancient mode of threshing grain, and separting the "wheat" from the "chaff." By the "wheat" allusion is made to the disciples of Christ who were preserved from the calamities which came upon that ungodly nation.

"In this whole verse (the 12th,) the destruction of the Jewish state is expressed in the terms of husbandmen; and by the wheat being gathered into the garner, seems meant, that the believers in Jesus should not be involved in that calamity."—*Bishop Pearce.*

"The Romans are here termed God's *fan*, as in verse 10, they are called his *axe*, and in chapter xxii. 7, they are termed his troops or armies. *His floor*—does not this mean the land of Judea, which had been long, as it were, the threshing floor of the Lord? God says, he will now, by the winnowing fan, (viz., the Romans,) thoroughly cleanse his floor—the wheat—those who believe in the Lord Jesus, he will gather into his garner—either take to heaven from the evil to come, or put in a place of safety, as he did the Christians, by sending them to Pelia, in Corlosyria, previously to the destruction of Jerusalem. But He will burn up the chaff—the disobedient and rebellious Jews, who would not come unto Christ that they might have life."—*Dr. Adam Clarke.*

The phrase "unquenchable fire," does not signify a fire that shall burn to all eternity; but signifies utter destruction; when applied to nations, it means complete overthrow, ruin.

"'Unquenchable fire'—that cannot be extinguished by man."—*Dr. Adam Clarke.*

"They put fire to the chaff at the wind side, and that keeps on, and never gives over, till it has consumed all the chaff, and so it is a kind of *asbeston pur*, an unquenchable fire — a fire never quenchable till it hath done it work. * * * * It was fulfilled on the Jews even in this life, (as it was oft foretold,) the godly, true penitents that received Christ, through these tribulations, were preserved, when the rest that could not bear or hold out the trial, all that the wind of temptation, false doctrine, etc., carried away, were generally destroyed — the corn laid up in the garner, and the chaff devoured with fire."—*Dr. Hammond.*

"'Unquenchable fire'—i. e., evidently until it had consumed the whole chaff, for after dry and combustible materials are set on fire, it does not go out until it has destroyed the whole. By these words is signified the utter destruction of the Jews, which commenced under Vespasian, and was completed at last under Adrian. Although there were some intervals without war, yet it was not finished until it had broken up and destroyed all the Jews of Palestine."—*Le Clerc.*

CHRIST JUDGING THE WORLD.

"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—ACTS xvii. 31.

Many professed religionists have erroneously supposed that this passage refers to the future, immortal world, and to a day, fixed in the counsels of the Almighty, when the whole intelligent universe will be assembled before the bar of God, after the resurrection, and judged according to their deserts; some acquitted and pronounced worthy of everlasting life, while others will be condemned, and consigned to the regions of hopeless despair. This judgment day, it is believed, was appointed from the foundation of the world. But this view of the subject is entirely *assumed*, there being not the least proof to substantiate such an opinion.

True, a day has been appointed, in which God, by his Son, Jesus Christ, was to judge the world in righteousness, but we are not informed that this work was to be done in the immortal state of existence. This mistaken opinion arises from a misapprehension of the biblical doctrine of judgment.

If the exposition which orthodoxy has given to this passage be correct, what significance would there be to the language: "But *now* commandeth men everywhere to repent, *because* he has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness?" The sacrificial church teaches that this day was appointed from the foundation of the world, and if so, the motive to repentance from this consideration was equally strong, centuries before the apostle uttered this language; but he speaks as though God, in some special sense, was about to judge the world in righteousness, and *because* of this, men were urged *then* to repent. But *now* commandeth men to repent, *because* He hath appointed a day in which mankind were to be judged.

He spoke as though a new administration was about to commence, and men were to be tried by different principles, and governed by a different law, hence the expression: "But *now* commandeth," etc., as though some new motive were presented to the world, to lead men to repentance.

We find upon examination that it was so. A brief reference to the context will essentially aid us in our present investigations. It appears that while Paul was at Athens, on a certain occasion, his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the whole city given to idolatry. Having himself been made acquainted with the way of life and salvation, he ardently desired that others should be brought to the knowledge of the truth, and rejoice in hope

of the glory of God. He saw the world lying in wickedness, and those about him lost in sin and error, groping in the darkness of heathenism, bowing to their idols, and worshiping — they knew not what!

When the world was thus wrapped in heathenish darkness, man was not held accountable to the law of Christ. That time of moral darkness and heathenism was to be winked at. That time of ignorance was permitted by God for some wise purpose, and during that period, the heathen were not to be judged by the light of Christianity. Hence it is said that that time of ignorance was to be winked at. But now that the gospel, designed for Jew and Gentile, was preached, and a new dispensation had commenced, and christian truths were proclaimed, all nations were to be judged by the higher principles of Christianity, and held accountable to the teachings of the gospel, and therefore all men were exhorted to repent; hence the language of the apostle: "But *now* commandeth men everywhere to repent." A different administration had commenced; a new era had begun; another day had dawned upon the moral universe; the day of Christian truth and love had commenced; the sun of righteousness had risen with healing in his wings! He had appeared, who was appointed by God, to judge the world in righteousness. Divine light had burst upon the moral universe; the moral darkness which had settled down upon the world was receding, and now

all were to be held amenable to the teachings of Christ. Hence all were commanded to listen to the heavenly Instructor, to turn from their idolatry, and receive Jesus as the Sent of God and the Savior of the world.

As God had appointed a day in which He was about to judge the world, or introduced a dispensation of grace through Jesus Christ, messengers of truth were now sent forth to instruct the Gentile nations of the earth concerning the principles of this new economy, as all people were now to be judged or governed by the divine teachings of the gospel. Hence a new motive was presented to the Gentiles, or the heathen nations, whose sins had before been winked at. God had permitted those nations to remain in ignorance without any special and divine illumination. The Jews had long been the depositories of heaven's truth, but now the Gentiles were to be favored with a divine revelation, and were to be fellow-heirs of the same promise and receive the heavenly benediction.

God had never before so revealed himself to the world, hence, He is said to have "winked" at that time of ignorance. For a time, He permitted the people to remain in ignorance, and made no miraculous communications to the Gentile world. But now the revelation made to the world was designed for *all the nations* of the earth, hence God commanded all men *now* to repent, to abandon their idolatrous worship, for He had appointed a day, or dispensation of grace and truth, through Jesus

Christ, and the world henceforth was to be judged by his righteous principles. Now a new dispensation had commenced; Christ's spiritual kingdom was established, and he was to reign and rule and govern by righteous principles. All were embraced in his heavenly mission, and all were to be blessed in his covenant of grace and truth. The former period of ignorance was permitted and passed, but now that God had made a revelation of Himself through Jesus Christ, all were required to give heed to his divine instruction and walk in obedience to his heavenly commands.

The passage before us then, has particular reference to the reign of Christ upon the earth, and has not the least allusion to the immortal world. To judge, in this scriptural sense, is *to reign, to govern, to rule.* Jesus came to establish a kingdom in the earth, to reign and govern by his divine principles, and we are now held amenable to his laws, judged by his teachings and condemned or acquitted, just as our conduct is in harmony with its requisitions. We stand before his teachings, which are the laws of his moral administration. Hence the significant language of Jesus, when he made his appearance on earth: "For judgment I am come into this world." John ix. 39. Again we read, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John v. 22. "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also." Verse 27. "Now is the judgment of this world." John xii. 31.

This *day* which God appointed to judge the world in righteousness refers to the gospel day, or to the whole period of Christ's reign. This gospel day, or dispensation of grace and love, is referred by the apostle as follows: "Now is the *day* of salvation." 2 Cor. vi. 2.

The word *day* in the Scriptures often means an indefinite period of time. "The *day* is at hand." Rom. xiii. 12. The night of heathenish darkness was far spent, and a brighter period was approaching—a better season was nigh at hand. Jesus referred to his reign upon earth by calling it a "*day*." "Abraham rejoiced to see my *day*, and he saw it, and was glad." John viii. 56.

That period of time had been spoken of as a *day*, by Zechariah the prophet, thus: "In that *day* there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." Zech. xiii. 1. "In that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one." Zech. xiv. 9. Again: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute *judgment* and justice in the earth." Jer. xxiii. 5.

Christ was the righteous Branch referred to by the prophet who was to execute *judgment in the earth*, hence he came to judge the world in righteousness. The world was to be judged by his principles and truth. Now that Christ had come to reign and rule and govern by the divine princi-

ples of his religion, the former ignorance which had been permitted, was *winked at*, or overlooked. The nations of the earth had been allowed to walk in their own way. But now a new era had commenced, a better dispensation began, a brighter *day* had dawned upon the world. God appointed a day, or dispensation of grace, to communicate divine truth to those sitting in darkness and in the region and shadow of death. Christ the heavenly messenger had made his appearance, hence the apostle says: "But *now* commandeth all men everywhere to repent." A new dispensation had commenced; the people were no longer to be justified by the law, but were to be judged by the principles of the gospel, therefore all were commanded to give heed to the teachings of Christ. And to show that he was divinely commissioned and sent of God, assurance had been given unto all men, in that, God had raised him from the dead.

Learned divines and commentators agree in saying that "judge" is often used in the Scriptures in the sense of "ruling," or "reigning." Macknight says: "In the Hebrew language, *to judge*, signifies to *rule*, or *govern*." In this sense, Christ came to *judge* men in the earth; to *rule* and *govern* by the all conquering power of his truth and love. For judgment he came into this world, to establish a spiritual kingdom and rule, or government. And he shall judge, or reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet, and God shall be all in all." 1 Cor. xv. 24.

ETERNAL JUDGMENT.

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection: not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."—HEBREWS vi. 1, 2.

This language, as it stands in our English version of the Scriptures, does not fully and clearly express the apostle's meaning. As the words now stand, the passage teaches that believers were to *abandon* or *leave* the principles of the doctrine of Christ, to go on unto perfection. It is absurd to suppose that Paul designed to affirm that the Hebrew Christians ought to forsake or leave the fundamental principles of Christianity and the doctrines of Christ, in order to go on to perfection, for in the immediate context the apostle speaks of their deficiency in those principles, and need of instruction in the oracles of truth. He says: "For when for the time, ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." He would have them rightly instructed in the word

of God. They were not to hold the great principles of the gospel in light esteem. He desired to have them progressive Christians; to make advancement in the virtues and graces of the gospel. Instead of recommending indifference to the doctrines of Christ, he urged them to growth in wisdom and knowledge, and not remain *babes* in the truth, but go forward unto perfection, not be satisfied with the mere rudiments of Christianity; having learned these, they should go on unto perfection; they should not turn back to the old dispensation — not turn again to the law, which had been a school-master to bring them to Christ. There was a disposition on the part of the Hebrew Christians to return to the ceremonies of the law, and to incorporate some of those ceremonies into their worship, having been strongly wedded to Judaism, it was difficult to draw them away from it. They had been instructed in the first principles of the gospel, but still they were strongly attached to the religion of their fathers, and continued to look back to the law dispensation, instead of pressing forward towards the higher truths of the gospel. Paul was afraid that they would return again to the beggarly elements of Judaism, or ceremonials of the law, and introduce the old form of repentance, the doctrine of baptisms or divers washings, laying on of hands, etc., as recognized by that old Jewish religion to which they were so strongly attached.

Not laying again the foundation of repentance

from dead works. Under the old dispensation, a man who came in contact with a dead body was regarded as unclean seven days. He was to purify himself by the sprinkling of the ashes of an heifer. (See Numbers xix. 11–19.) The apostle denominates this ceremonial of the law, "*dead works.*" Now that the gospel had come, whose author had blotted out the hand writing of ordinances, there was no further need for such ceremony, and it was only *dead works.* He says:

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Heb. ix. 13, 14.

All such forms and ceremonies under the gospel dispensation were useless, hence, he calls them *dead works.* If the Jew could be purified by the ashes of an heifer, how much greater the purification by the offering of Christ. Now, all were to look to Christ, and under this new economy, there was no necessity of returning to the law or laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works as formerly. These things had passed, and the Jew, instead of looking back to these, should look to Christ, as the author and finisher of our faith. It was not enough to exercise faith towards God, under the new dispensation, but the believer was to recognize Christ as the true Teacher sent

from God. The ancient Hebrews had a faith in a *coming* Messiah; but Paul instructed the Hebrew Christians, now that Christ *had* made his appearance, that they should not return to the old dispensation, and believe that God *would* send a Savior, and lay again any such foundation of faith in God. They were to receive Christ as the promised Messiah and Savior of the world.

Doctrine of Baptisms. This form of expression was peculiarly Jewish, and shows that reference was made to the ceremonies of the law. Under the gospel era, there was "one Lord, one faith, *one* baptism," but under the Jewish economy, there were *baptisms*, or washings. Paul calls them "divers baptisms," or "washings." These ordinances were all abrogated by the introduction of Christianity, and constituted no part of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. Now that Christ had come, the Hebrew Christians should hear him, and no longer adhere to the old doctrine of baptisms, and Jewish washings, and of the *laying on of hands.* This refers to the ceremony of the priest, who placed his hands upon the head of the goat, and confessed the sins of the people, and then the goat escaped into the wilderness, or land of forgetfulness. (Lev. xvi. 21.) In this way the people were ceremonially purified. But now that Christ had come, the people were to be purified by the application of his grace and truth and love to the heart.

Resurrection of the Dead. We do not understand

that any allusion is here made to the immortal resurrection of all mankind; but rather to a resuscitation of animal life, as referred to in chapter xi. 35, "Women received their dead *raised to life again;* and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might attain a better resurrection." A few instances are mentioned in the Old Testament, where the dead were restored to life again. Elijah raised the son of a widow, and Elisha raised the Shumanite's son. These were looked upon by the Jews as remarkable exhibitions of the divine presence and favor. But even such wonderful events should not turn them away from the higher display of God's favor, as revealed through Jesus Christ, who had demonstrated the doctrine of immortality, and brought life and immortality to light.

And of eternal judgment, or ancient judgment, or temporal calamities, or judgment of old. It is probable that allusion is here made to the calamities, or judgments which came upon the Egyptians, for oppressing the ancient Hebrews. It was a judgment that was eternal, or forever, as it is called. "For the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more *forever*." Ex. xiv. 13. Bishop Pearce, an eminent orthodox divine, has the following remarks upon this passage:

"I think, therefore, that the words are to be understood in a very different manner, and *krima* here seems to me to be put for temporal judgments. Thus the word is used: 1 Peter iv. 17, 'the time is

come that judgment must begin at the house of God,' where the context will not suffer us to take it in any other sense; compare verses 16, 18, 19. So again, 1 Cor. xi. 29, 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.' What this judgment was, appears by the next verse: 'For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.' The word *aionios*, which we have rendered *eternal*, I take to respect not the time to come, but the time past, and to signify *ancient*, or *past long ago*. That the word is thus used without any respect to eternity, we may see, Rom. xvi. 25; 2 Tim. i. 9; Titus i. 2. See also these places in the LXX., Psalms lxxvii. 5; Prov. xxii. 28; Jer. xviii. 15; Exek. xxxvi. 2. According to this account of the words, we may consider the Jewish religion as established by the ancient and tremendous judgments, of the execution of which, the books of Moses give an account; such as the deluge, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and more especially the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, and perhaps the judgments of God upon the Israelites in the wilderness for their impenitence and unbelief. Of this last, he had, indeed, treated before, but not as a foundation of the Jewish religion, but as an example by which Christians might be warned."

Paul labored to convince the Hebrew Christians, who exhibited some proclivities still for the law, that now Christ had come, they should not turn to the weak and beggarly elements of Judaism; but leave these and go on unto perfection, make advancement in christian truth and the christian life,

GNASHING OF TEETH

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."—LUKE xiii. 28.

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."—MATTHEW viii. 11, 12.

Those who are familiar with the Scriptures, are aware that the phrases "kingdom of God," and "kingdom of heaven," are often employed by the sacred penmen to denote the dispensation of grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. Reference was made by these expressions, to his system of religion, and the beautiful and exalted truths which he came to establish in the earth. When John went forth to prepare the people for the Messiah of the prophets, he preached, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." A new era was approaching, a new dispensation was about to commence, a king was to reign in righteousness, and mankind were to be judged by the principles of his religion. The kingdom of God is within you, or among you.

The phrases "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven," are used interchangeably. The reign of the Messiah, or his dispensation of grace and truth, is spoken of by one evangelist, as the "kingdom of God," and by another, as the "kingdom of heaven." As Christ was to be king, and mankind the moral subjects of his reign, he speaks of it as *his* kingdom. "My kingdom is not of this world." John xviii. 36. His kingdom was not earthly but spiritual. The kingdom here signifies reign, rule, government, authority. Christ was to reign among men, and govern by the principles of his religion.

When it is said that the kingdom of heaven *is at hand* (Matt. iii. 2,) the meaning is, that his system of religion was about to be established. People were spoken of as not being *far from the kingdom.* (Mark xii. 34.) The meaning of this is, that such were disposed to examine the truth, and were nearly convinced that Christ was the Messiah of the prophets, and nearly ready to concede the justice of his claims. It is spoken of as *coming* to the people, (Matt. xii. 28,) and as being among the people. (Luke xvii. 21.) Men are represented as *pressing* into this kingdom. (Luke xvi. 16.) This signified the readiness of many to avow their belief in Christ as a true Teacher, sent from God. The enlightenment of the human mind by the power of christian truth, is spoken of as a translation into this kingdom. (Col. i. 13.) The Pharisees are represented as shutting up the kingdom of

heaven against men. (Matt. xxiii. 13.) Through their opposition to the truth and bitter persecution, they prevented many from embracing the Savior's religion, and in this way they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, and shut themselves out, or deprived themselves and others of all the enjoyments and blessings of Christianity.

This kingdom was to be taken from the wicked, persecuting Jew and given to a nation (the Gentiles) who would bring forth fruits thereof. (Matt. xxi. 43.) And then they would see that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had faith in Christ and his kingdom, or reign of grace, while they rejected the Messiah, in whom those patriarchs believed. Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day or reign of righteousness, and was glad, while those persecuting Jews, who prided themselves on having the faith of Abraham, rejected the Savior and put him to an open shame. The kingdom should be taken from them and given to a nation who would bring forth fruits thereof; and then, when they should find themselves thrust out, having neglected to receive Christ, they would see that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had looked forward to the coming of Christ—they had believed on him, and in this sense were in his kingdom, and they themselves cast out. This was not the kingdom of immortal glory, but the kingdom of grace and truth in the earth. Look at the context. Matthew informs us that a centurion, a Roman officer, and a Gentile, earnestly besought the assistance of Jesus in reliev-

ing his servant, who was grievously afflicted. The centurion indicated the strength of his faith, by declaring that if Christ should *speak* the word his servant would be healed. Jesus on hearing this, declared that he had not found so great faith in all Israel. This Gentile had more faith in him than the Jews, to whom he was especially sent, and who professed to be looking for the Messiah. And knowing how his religion would extend, his truth unfold, and kingdom advance, he said: "And many shall come from the east and the west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven," but the "children of the kingdom," or the Jewish nation, "shall be cast out into darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The object of Christ was to show that *many* should embrace his religion, that the case of the centurion was not a solitary instance, but many should come from among the Gentiles, his religion would obtain in the world, and in heathen lands from afar, from the east and the west, converts would be multiplied to the faith of the Lord Jesus. Having a faith like Abraham's, in Christ, they were said to sit down in this kingdom with him. And the children of the kingdom (the Jewish kingdom) should be cast out into outer darkness. The Gentiles having the Abrahamic faith enjoyed rest, for they that be of faith are blessed *with* faithful Abraham, the apostle declares. (Gal. iii. 9).

The wailing and gnashing of teeth refer evident-

ly to the severe national judgments which were to come upon those who rejected Christ, spoken of in the succeeding context, when their house should be left unto them desolate, thus:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee: how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not? Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Lord." Luke xiii. 34, 35.

While this language indicated the national ruin which awaited them, no reference is made to their final destruction in the immortal world, as many suppose. It referred to the judgments of God in the earth. And the imagery is framed so as to heighten the contrast between the conditions of the disbelieving Jews and the patriarchs of whom they professed to think so highly, and of whose relationship they boasted with pride. They claimed Abraham for their father; how intense, therefore, must be their suffering when they saw the separation that had taken place—Abraham having looked forward to the coming of Christ and rejoiced to see his day, while they, now that Christ *had* come, rejected him as an impostor! Instead of being the children of Abraham, they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and were cast out of the gospel kingdom, closing up the avenues to their souls, and shutting out the light of truth, and were

said to be cast out into outer darkness, where there was wailing and suffering. But they, too, should be brought back, and they should say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." And Paul declares, "Blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

WHITBY.—"To lie down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, *doth not signify to enjoy everlasting happiness* in heaven with them, but only to *become the sons of Abraham through faith*, (Gal. iii. 7,) and so to be blessed with faithful Abraham coming on them, that they may receive the promise of the spirit, (verse 14,) through faith in Christ to be the seed of Abraham and heirs, according to the promise, (verse 29,) viz. the promise made to Abraham, (Gen. xii. 3,) renewed to Isaac, (Gen. xxvi. 4,) and confirmed to Jacob, (Gen. xxvii. 14,) and to be, according to Isaac, the children of promise." (Gal. iv. 28).

TOMSON'S BEZA.—"The following is given as the substance of the passage, commencing at verse 5: 'Christ, by setting before them the example of the uncircumcised centurion, and yet of an excellent faith, provoketh the Jews to emulation, and together forewarneth them of their casting off, and the calling of the Gentiles.'"—*Note in loc.*

LET HIM BE ACCURSED.

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."—GALATIANS i. 8.

To ascertain what gospel Paul preached to the people, we must appeal to his epistles, wherein we find a record of the truths he taught. It is called the "gospel of the *grace of God*." Acts xx. 24. "The *glorious* gospel of Christ." 2 Cor. iv. 4. "The gospel of your salvation." Eph. i. 13. "The gospel of peace." Eph. vi. 15, and, "The gospel of the blessed God." 2 Tim. i. 8. The significance and appropriateness of this language will be apparent, when we remember that gospel means *good news*, glad tidings of great joy. It was interesting intelligence, good tidings to all people; hence it was called the gospel of the *grace* of God which bringeth salvation to all men. Even the feet of those who preached the gospel were called beautiful, because they brought "glad tidings of good things." Rom. x. 15.

This gospel brought salvation through Christ to the world of mankind. Hence, Christ is frequently called the "Savior of the world," not that he

came to save a small remnant of humanity, and let a large portion of the race sink down to perdition; not that he came to save a mere fraction of the universe, but that he came to save the intelligent, moral creation. "This is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." John iv. 42. Jesus declared that he came not to "judge the world, but to *save the world*." John xii. 47. "The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." 1 John iv. 14.

This was the gospel of good tidings that Paul preached, which brought salvation to all men. He preached no other gospel, and he received it not of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

A brief reference to his epistles will show that it embraced all mankind. He shows that the same "many" that were made sinners, should be made righteous. (Rom. xi. 32.) And, speaking of the Jews and Gentiles, he declares that "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all." Rom. xi. 32. "For as in Adam ALL die, even so in Christ, shall ALL be made alive." 1 Cor. xv. 22. He had purposed in himself, "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." Eph. i. 10. "God will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. iv. 4. "We trust in the living God who is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe." 1 Tim. ii. 10. This was the gospel which was preached to Abra-

ham, saying: "In thee, shall nations be blessed." Gal. iii. 8.

Paul was made a minister of the truth, and commissioned to preach the gospel of the grace of God, the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets. For the proclamation of this truth, he labored and suffered reproach; and yet he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, but was bold and earnest in its defense. In the context, he speaks of some who did not remain firm and steadfast in this truth, and he laments that some were so soon removed from the truth, and turned to another gospel which was not after Christ. He saw that some attempted to pervert the gospel of Christ. In the early ages of the Christian Church, many spurious gospels were in circulation, and Dr. Adam Clarke says that we have the names of more than *seventy* of the *spurious narratives* still on record, and it was because of these numerous and false narratives that Luke wrote his gospel. (See Luke i. 1.) In some of these narratives, or gospels as they are called, the necessity of circumcision, and subjection to the Mosaic law in connection with the gospel is strongly urged.

In the immediate context, Paul evidently refers to one or more of these spurious records. He exhorts the brethren to remain steadfast in the truth, and be not troubled by those who would pervert the gospel of Christ. If any one should preach any other gospel than that he had preached, let

him be accursed; let him not be fellowshiped, not be received as a true teacher. Such should be withdrawn from and discountenanced. The word *accursed* here (original *anathema*,) seems to be used in the sense of *separated.* If any now preach any other gospel, let him be *accursed* or *separated* from you. Paul applied the same term to himself, and wished himself *accursed* (*anathema*) from Christ. (Rom. ix. 3.) The marginal reading in this passage is "*separate.*" This was a strong form of speech on the part of the apostle, to express his intense desire to have the Jews converted to Christianity. He would make any sacrifice to accomplish this, consistent with his religion.

In the passage under consideration, Paul designed to guard the brethren against false doctrines and damnable heresies. He proclaimed the gospel in its purity and fullness, declaring that God will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, and that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father. If any other gospel than this were preached, it was erroneous, and all such false teachers should be rejected and separated from. They should not be fellowshiped. In this sense the word *accursed* is employed in the passage before us.

Our views are corroborated by the following orthodox commentators:

HAMMOND.—"And if any attempt to do that, though it were I myself, or even an angel from

heaven, I proclaim unto you mine opinion and apostolical sentence, that you are to disclaim and renounce all communion with him, to look on him as an excommunicated person, under the second degree of excommunication, that none is to have any commerce with in sacred matters. And that he may take more heed to what I say, I repeat it again, Whosoever teaches you any new doctrine, contrary to what I at first preached unto you, let him be cast out of the church by you."—*Par. in loc.*

DIODATI.—"*Accursed:* viz., execrable and abominable."—*Annot. in loc.*

WAKEFIELD.—"But, if even we, or an angel from heaven, should preach the gospel differently from what we did preach it unto you, let him be rejected. As we told you before, so now I tell you again, if any one preach a different gospel to you from what ye received from us, let him be rejected."—*Trans. in loc.*

CLARKE.—"Perhaps this is not designed as an *imprecation*, but as a simple direction; for the word here may be understood as implying that such a person should have no countenance in his bad work, but let him, as *Theodoret* expresses it, *be separated* from the communion of the church. This, however, would also imply that, unless the person repented, the divine judgments would soon follow."—*Com. in loc.*

CALMET.—"The apostle, in this place says, If an angel, or if he himself, should so far swerve from the true faith as to preach another gospel, different from that which he had preached, *anathema*, let him be cut off from the communion of the faithful, so that he shall not in any manner be a partaker of the benefits of the church."—*Com. in loc.*

AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die; and after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation."—HEBREWS ix. 27, 28.

This passage is frequently urged in support of the doctrine which teaches that there will be a day of general judgment in the immortal state of existence, when the whole intelligent universe of God will be assembled before what is called his "bar," there placed upon trial, and a part acquitted and pronounced worthy of everlasting life, and a part condemned to everlasting death and misery, among whom may be the dearest objects of our affections, if not indeed ourselves. We present a few reasons why we cannot accept this interpretation which has obtained so extensively in the religious world.

1. It is an entirely useless work, on the supposition that the state of man is unalterably fixed at death, as is taught by the sacrificial church. Those who accept this doctrine of judgment in the future world, contend that man is in a state of happiness or misery immediately after death, also that there

is no change of condition in the immortal world. As death leaves him, it is affirmed, so judgment will find him. If man's fate is sealed, and his condition is unalterably fixed at death, for what possible object can there be a day of judgment after death? It is not to correct any mistake! No one is in heaven who ought to be in hell—no one in hell that ought to be in heaven. Why then, when infinite ages shall have rolled away, bring the people from heaven and hell, put them upon trial, and judge them all back again, to their former state and condition? Such a work would be a gigantic farce, in which no sensible man would engage, much less Almighty God, who is infinite in wisdom and benevolence.

2. The immediate context show that the apostle was not speaking of the natural death of all men, as is asserted by those who accept the common exposition of the subject. Paul was speaking of things pertaining to this life, and drawing a comparison between the sacrificial death of the High Priest and the sacrificial death of Christ. We cannot believe that the apostle would leave the subject matter of discourse, and introduce an irrelevant topic, which found no support in reason or revelation. The theme of discourse with the apostle was the two priesthoods, and he was exhibiting the superiority of Christ's priesthood over Aaron's. This is the theme dwelt upon in the context, and the text itself is a continuation of the same discourse as all can see upon examination.

3. The original reading of the passage cannot be made to harmonize with the common exposition of the subject. Every scholar who will turn to the Greek Testament, will find the definite article *tois* (English *the*) before the word *anthropois*, rendered *men;* and had it been translated, as it evidently ought to have been, the text would have read, *the men*, plainly referring, as every grammarian must admit, to some particular men. The same word occurs in Heb. vii. 27, and is rendered *those;* "Who needeth not daily, as *those* High Priests, to offer up sacrifice," etc. In the passage before us, the original word might have been translated *those* as in the passage just referred to. Then it would have read, "*As* it is appointed unto *those* men to die sacrificially, *so* Christ was appointed to die a sacrificial death." The men referred to, were those High Priests who daily offered sacrifices. The passage properly rendered, would read: "And as it is appointed unto *the men* once to die," etc., clearly indicating that some particular men were appointed to die, after which, to them came the judgment.

The context shows that the High Priests were the men thus appointed to die, once every year. They died by proxy, a *sacrificial death*, for which purpose they were *appointed*, or set apart, as Christ, in the execution of his mission, was *appointed* to die a sacrificial death.

This sacrificial death of the High Priests constituted a part of their mission; and when consecra-

ted to this high office, they were *appointed* to this work, and thus they made an atonement for the sins of the people, which was a figurative representation of the atonement made by Jesus Christ. Hence, the death spoken of was not the natural death of all mankind, but the sacrificial death of the High Priest and of Christ. Had Paul been speaking of the natural death of all men, instead of saying, "As it is appointed unto the men once to die," etc., he would have said: "It is appointed unto all men once to die, and after death the judgment," etc. This, indeed, is the way in which it is generally quoted by sectarian religionists, and such *would*, undoubtedly, have been the apostle's language, had such been his meaning. Besides, Paul was drawing a comparison between the death of the men referred to, and the death of Christ; which shows clearly that he could not have alluded to the natural death of all mankind, for in that case the comparison would have been improper, and there would have been no appropriateness to the language employed — no significance to the connective words "AS" and "so." And *as* it is *appointed* unto the men once to die....*so* Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.

As the High Priest died a sacrificial death and bore the sins of many, so Christ was once offered in sacrifice and bore the sins of many. With this interpretation, there is appropriateness to the language, but to apply it to all mankind destroys the comparison. There would be no propriety in say-

ing that *as* a man dies with fever, or consumption, *so* Christ was offered to *bear the sins of many.* The comparison does not hold good, and the connectives, "AS" and "SO" are without meaning.

To appreciate the apostle's meaning in the passage under consideration, we must carefully consult the context. As already indicated, Paul was instituting a comparison between the office and mission of Christ, and the mission of the High Priest, and was showing the superior excellency of Christianity, over the law dispensation. Once a year the High Priest went into the holy of holies to offer sacrifices for the people. The first verse of the context informs us that the High Priest went into the second tabernacle with blood, which he offered for himself and the errors of the people. This was a figure of Christ and the second covenant, Christ being come, an High Priest entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The context reads as follows:

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the High Priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others: For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And *as* it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: *So* Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and

unto them that look for him shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. ix. 24-28.

From this it clearly appears that as the High Priests were the men set apart, or *appointed* to die a sacrificial death, so Christ, as the High Priest of a better covenant, died to put away all sin-offering, and now there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. After the sacrificial death of the High Priest, he appeared again for the justification of the people, and through him, they were accepted by the Lord. When the High Priest went into the holy place before the Lord, he bore upon his heart a plate, upon which was inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. This was called the "breastplate of judgment," or "judgment of the children of Israel," in Exodus xxviii. 29, 30:

"And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually."

After the sacrificial death of the High Priest, he entered into the holy place beyond the veil and appeared before the Mercy Seat, where his offering was accepted by the Lord, and thus through him the people were ceremonially purified. And when

the people without, heard the sound of the golden bells which were attached to the garment of the priest, they shouted for joy, as that was a signal of their acceptance. This was the judgment of the children of Israel. After the offering of the High Priest, or his sacrificial death, judgment of acquittal was pronounced and the people stood ceremonially purified before the Lord. So Christ was once offered to deliver those subject to ordinances from the ceremonial law, to blot out the hand writing of ordinances, nailing it to the cross, and thus offered himself once for all, and in this way put away all sin-offering by the sacrifice of himself; and thenceforth all were to look to the truths of the gospel for justification and eternal life.

The apostle teaches that Christ as the great High Priest, superceded the old priesthood; and now we are to look to Christ, in whom we have eternal redemption. Unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin [sin-offering] unto salvation. Many misapprehend the meaning of the term *look* in the passage, by supposing that it teaches the personal re-appearance of Christ. We do not so understand the language. To *look* to Christ is to have faith in him, and to accept him as a true Teacher sent from God. We look to him when we repose confidence in his word, and accept him as our guide. In this sense we find this word used in the Scriptures. "*Look* unto me all the ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else." Isaiah xlv. 22. To *look*

unto God is to have faith in Him and obey his commands. To *look* unto Christ is to believe on him to the salvation of our souls.

Our attention is now directed to Christ for salvation; and unto them that look for him, who seek for him, and desire to know him, does he now appear, not in the light of a sin-offering, but as the author of eternal salvation; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Through Christ we obtain a hope of eternal redemption for all.

Judgment came upon all men to condemnation, through the disobedience of one; so through Christ the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Christ now appears to every believer in him, without sin-offering unto salvation. He appears to the believer, through his truth and manifestation of his spirit. He appears not as a crucified Redeemer, not to offer himself again in sacrifice, but he appears as the risen Christ, having brought life and immortality to light.

Him, hath God the Father sealed, and we now see him as the Conqueror of hell (*hades*) and of death, as the one who plucked the garland from the grim-messenger's brow, and rose triumphantly over the power of the destroyer; and he appears to us as the Savior of the world: For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

VENGEANCE OF ETERNAL FIRE.

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."—JUDE 7.

"And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly."—1 PETER ii. 6.

The object of these writers is to exhort the brethren to be constant in their profession of Christianity, and faithful in all their trials and persecutions. False teachers had crept in to pervert the ways of the Lord, and turn the brethren away from the truth; and Jude exhorts them to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. To show that these false teachers would be punished, this apostle referred to several cases where it was conceded that the sinful and disobedient had met with an adequate retribution. Among them, Sodom and Gomorrah are mentioned, together with the cities which were destroyed by fire. No reference is made here to the immortal world, to the destruction of the soul in eternity.

Not unfrequently the destruction which came upon Sodom and Gomorrah, is referred to for the

purpose of indicating temporal ruin and overwhelming calamity. (See Isaiah xiii. 19; Jeremiah xlix. 18.) When it is said they suffered the vengeance of eternal fire, it means simply complete destruction. Those cities were swept away forever by the fire, the judgment was complete and the destruction perpetual. Hence, they were spoken of as suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. No vestige of those cities remained, hence the fire that consumed them was called *eternal*. Dr. Whitby comments as follows on this passage:

"That this is spoken not of the cities themselves, but of the inhabitants which dwell in them — i. e., of them who had *given themselves over to fornication, and gone after strange flesh* — is evident; but yet I conceive they are said to *suffer the vengeance of eternal fire*, not because their souls are at present punished in hell fire, but because they and their cities perished from that fire from heaven which brought a perpetual and irreparable destruction on them and their cities."

And the eminent Dr. Barnes says:

"The passage *cannot be used to prove* that the particular dwellers in Sodom will be punished forever, whatever may be the truth on that point."

Gilpin.—"Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire: that is, those cities were *forever destroyed*. The apostle cannot well mean future punishments, because he mentions it as a *deigma* — something that was to be a visible example to all. That word (deriving from *deiknumia, to show, or exhibit,*) properly signifies to give a sample of something to be sold."—*Expos. in loc.*

BENSON.—"By their suffering the punishment of eternal fire, St. Jude did not mean that those wicked persons were then, and would be always, burning in hell fire. For he intimates that what they suffered was set forth to public view, and appeared to all, as an example (or specimen,) of God's displeasure against vice. That fire which consumed Sodom, etc., might be called eternal, as it burned until it had utterly consumed them, or beyond the possibility of their ever being inhabited, or rebuilt. St. Peter has well expressed it, in saying, *God reduced them to ashes.* But the word will have a yet more emphatical meaning, (if as several authors affirm,) that fire continued to burn a long while; nay even to the time of the writing of this epistle, and afterwards small flames, did sometimes break out."—*Note in loc.*

HAMMOND."—Everlasting destruction signifies an utter destruction, as of Sodom it is said, Jude 7, that it endured the *vengeance of eternal fire and brimstone*, which in all reason belonging to the fire and brimstone that destroyed Sodom, must signify, not the eternal burning of that fire, but the utter consumption of the city by that fire, or the fire's never ceasing to burn till it had utterly consumed the city."—*Annot. in* 2 *Thess. i.* 9.

DODDRIDGE.—"And the earth has produced many awful scenes, in which the divine vengeance has its triumph over sinful mortals, as particularly Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner with them committing fornication, and yet by grosser and more unnatural licentiousness, going after strange and detestable gratifications of their pampered and indulged flesh, are set forth for an example to other presumptuous sinners; suffering that which really appears a most

lively emblem of the vengeance of eternal fire, having their lovely and fruitful country turned into a kind of hell upon earth."—*Par. in loc.*

The opinion of these learned and distinguished commentators, we think, are correct. Dr. Barnes, the eminent Presbyterian divine, here says, that that the passage cannot be used to prove the doctrine of endless punishment? Not the slightest allusion is made to suffering in the immortal world.

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Whitby has the following on *aionios:*

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WHO SHALL RISE FIRST?

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." —1 THESSALONIANS iv. 15–17.

As the meaning of this passage is not apparent to the English reader, different classes of religionists have urged it in support of conflicting theories. Much of its obscurity is doubtless attributable to the common translation which does not fully express the meaning of the original. Dr. Adam Clarke thinks that a better rendering of *phthnao*, here translated *prevent*, would be, "go before," or "anticipated," or "be before," though he adds, "we use it now in the sense of *to hinder* or *obstruct*." Macknight agrees in the main with this learned divine.

The context shows clearly that the author of these words referred to the time when Christ's kingdom should be established in the earth, and the world judged by the principles of his religion.

When Christ was upon the earth, he spoke of his coming again with power and great glory. He declared that some who listened to his instructions, should not taste of death till they saw the Son of Man coming in his kingdom. (Matt. xvi. 27, 28.) The meaning of this is, that he should come during the lifetime of some whom he addressed. In the preceding context, Paul refers to the persecutions which the early Christians were to suffer in behalf of the truth, and urges them to great fidelity, and expresses a desire to see them that he might perfect that which was lacking in their faith, and prayed that they might be established unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the *coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, with all his saints. This evidently is the same coming as is spoken of in the passage under consideration, and the same that Christ spoke of and confined to the lifetime of some who heard him. After stating that Christ should descend from heaven, the apostle adds: "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and Safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them....and they shall not escape." This passage, which speaks of Christ's coming as a *thief in the night*, so clearly resembles that recorded in Matt. xxiv. 43, 44, that it is quite probable that the apostle had his eye upon these words of the Master: "If the good man of the

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In the figurative language before us, Paul designed to express a similar idea. And when he speaks of some who should be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, he refers to the triumph of the truth, the eminent success which should attend the Savior's kingdom, and the rest and deliverance from persecution which should be enjoyed by those who remain faithful and endure unto the end. The gospel should be successfully proclaimed, the word of God would run and have free course, and be glorified, and converts multiplied to the faith of the Lord Jesus. This thought was designed to impart peace and comfort, hence the apostle adds: "Therefore comfort one another with these words." Paul designed, therefore, by these words to teach a comforting sentiment, which presupposes that he had no reference to the terrible retributions of eternity which are taught in human creeds, when Christ shall come to reward the righteous and punish the wicked. Had he entertained any such sentiment, there would be no comfort in the words. The views to which we have given expression, are both rational and comforting.

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thereof is nigh." Luke xxi. 20. In this connection, we should bear in mind the reason which Peter assigns for writing his epistle, namely, to stir up the minds of the brethren by way of remembrance, that they might not forget the words of the prophets and apostles of our Lord. (2 Peter iii. 2.) Peter speaks of a class of scoffers who would sneeringly and deridingly say of Christ, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (See verse 4.) Such would be suddenly swept away as were the antediluvians by the judgment of God. The Savior, speaking of the overthrow of the Jewish nation, makes use of the same illustration — (Matt. xxiv. 38,) — and adds, (verse 42,) "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." He also speaks of his coming as a thief in the night, that is, unexpectedly as a thief. Peter, having learned this of the Master, naturally employs the same similitude, and predicts those national judgments under the highly figurative language of "the heavens passing away with a great noise and the elements melting with fervent heat." Jesus referred to the same fearful events by saying that the "stars shall fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." Matt. xxiv. 29; 2 Peter iii. 10.

After Peter had predicted the passing away of the old heavens and old earth, by which he designed to represent the passing away of the old Jewish economy, with its forms and ceremonies; he speaks of the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, that is, the new and better cove-

nant, or gospel dispensation. He exhorts the brethren to fidelity in the following language: "Seeing ye know these things before, *beware* lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." And Jesus exhorted the disciples to take heed to themselves, lest that day come upon them *unawares*. So similar is the language employed by Peter and Christ, that we are convinced that both refer to the same event.

In the passage before us, reference is made to the epistles of Paul, in which are some things hard to be understood; that is, the meaning of which was not readily perceived, which the unlearned and unstable wrest as they do the other scriptures, to their own destruction. The unstable were those not fully established in the truth. They were those to whom Jesus referred, who heard the word with joy, yet had no depth of root in them, hence, would endure only for a time; they were not rooted and grounded in the faith, and soon their love waxed cold. Such perverted Paul's epistles, and misapplied other scriptures, which contained warnings of those severe national calamities, which had special application to themselves.

The particular scriptures here referred to, which the unstable wrested to their own destruction, undoubtedly were the discourses of Jesus concerning the second destruction of the Jewish nation, as reported in the gospels by the evangelists, in connection with those ancient prophecies of the Old

Testament, which foretold the coming of Christ, and the second national death of the Jews. Those gospels were written about thirty years previous to to the epistle containing the passage before us. Those scriptures contained a record of those predictions of the Savior concerning the fate of the Jewish nation. The unstable disbelieved and sneeringly said, "Where is the promise of his coming?" They misapplied the predictions contained in those scriptures, which had special application to themselves, and hence wrested them to their own destruction; they discredited the testimony, and consequently made no effort to escape the fearful judgments of God, till they found themselves overwhelmed in national wars and calamities, when they cried, "Lord, Lord, open unto us." Then there was no escape; the door was shut, the "great gulf" was fixed and could not be passed. Jesus had foretold those calamities, and spoken of the signs which should precede his coming, but they heeded them not; and thus wrested the scriptures to their own destruction — a national destruction greater than ever had been, or ever should be again. Those who disbelieved the Savior's predictions, became involved in the general ruin.

By "the other scriptures," alluded to in this text, which the unlearned and unstable wrested to their own destruction, undoubtedly were the prophecies of the Old Testament which referred to Christ. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah of the prophets, whose character and mission had been spoken of

by ancient seers; and yet, the people rejected him. "He came to his own, and his own received him not." He told the Jews to search the "scriptures," for they are they which testify of me. John v. 33. They looked upon Christ as an impostor, misapplied all those prophecies which related to him, and wrested those scriptures to their own destruction. Had they received Christ, as the Messiah of the prophets as he claimed to be, they would not have brought upon themselves swift destruction. But they persecuted the Son of God, put him to an open shame, and were nationally destroyed, suffered everlasting, or age-lasting punishment. This we regard as the primary meaning of the passage before us. No reference is here made to the immortal world.

CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 TIMOTHY iv. 6–8.

It may be proper to remark at the outset, that there is a difference of opinion among learned men in regard to the *time* when this epistle was written; some suppose it to have been written in the year 61, while others think it must have been written in the year 66. Some have argued that it was the *first* letter Paul addressed to Timothy, while others contend that it was the *second*, as it purports to be. The weight of the evidence seems to be in favor of the latter conclusion, and that this epistle was penned about the year 66. It is supposed that the apostle suffered martyrdom about this time, but the evidence is by no means conclusive upon this point.

The context shows that there were perilous times in the *last days*, an expression which refers more particularly to the closing period and scenes con-

nected with the Jewish dispensation. In Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, he says that God, in time past, had spoken unto the fathers by the prophets; but now in these *last days*, had spoken by his Son, the appointed Heir of all things. (Heb. i. 1, 2.) And among the signs which were to precede the appearing of the Son of man, false Christs were to arise, and some would abandon the truth, and by their instability, bring a reproach upon the cause of Christ. Reference is made to such in the context. The time would come, as the apostle indicates, when people would not endure sound doctrine, but would heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and depart from the truth of the gospel and simplicity of Christ.

But Paul charges Timothy (his son in the faith) before him who is to appear in his kingdom, to be faithful, to watch and do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of his ministry. He urges Timothy with earnestness to serve his Master with christian fidelity. Paul was speaking of the faithful and unfaithful servants of Christ. Many had apostatized and swerved from the truth as the Savior had foretold. (See Matt. xxiv. 12.) Demas, as the context informs us, had forsaken Paul, having loved this present world, and the apostle urges Timothy to be true to his profession, and faithful to the cause of Christ, so that at last he might have the reflection of having fought a good fight, for the Right, for Truth, for God and Humanity. Paul, we think, designed to express his *willingness*

to die rather than the settled conviction that his work on earth was about to close. Whatever might be the divine arrangement, he bowed submissively to it, believing that, if necessary, God would deliver him out of the hands of his enemies. If God were about to call him from earth, he was ready to depart and be with Christ, which was far better. He had fought a good fight and kept the faith. In all circumstances, he had acknowledged his allegiance to his Lord and Master, and never shrank from duty because of persecution. He had been in perils by land and sea, scourged and imprisoned, and now if called to die, he had the sweet consciousness of having been faithful; and in due time his fidelity to Christ would be acknowledged; he would have a crown of righteousness at the appearing of Christ in his kingdom.

The *day* spoken of in the text, refers to the period of time so frequently alluded to in the gospels, when Christ should come in his kingdom, when the principles of his religion should be fully established in the earth, and the Jewish power humbled by the Roman conqueror. Then persecution measurably ceased, Christianity become more firmly established, and the word of God ran and had free course and was glorified. This was the *day* in which the Son of man was revealed, the gospel day which Abraham rejoiced to see and was glad. It was in this *day*, or period of time, that Paul was to have a crown of righteousness; or, in other words, was to be honored for his fidelity to the cause of Christ,

and not Paul only, but all who should endure faithful unto the end.

This language, of course, is highly figurative. The *crown* in ancient times was awarded to victors in the Olympic games, as a token of honor. Used here in a figurative sense, the language expresses the honor which should be awarded those who ran the Christian race. The language was penned to encourage Timothy to remain firm and steadfast in the truth, and faithful even unto death; and though persecuted and ill-treated, yet the time would come when they all should be honored for their fidelity to Christ's cause, and through their instrumentality, converts should be multiplied to the faith of the Lord Jesus, who would ever be a crown of honor to them. But if unfaithful, no such crown should be awarded them. They would not be honored or respected. Though Paul was persecuted when he addressed Timothy, yet the *day* or time was coming when he would be *honored* for his fidelity to the truth. In different places, Paul calls believers a crown. He and his co-workers in the ministry labored with much success in establishing the gospel of the grace of God in the earth. Through their instrumentality, converts were multiplied to the truth. Bands of Christians were gathered together, who were ready to acknowledge the fidelity of the apostles, and honor them in their affections. Believers, as seals of their ministry, would rise up and call them blessed, and defend them against the attacks of the enemy.

Paul, in writing to the Philippians, employs the following language: "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy *and crown*, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." Phil. iv. 1. And to the Thessalonians he writes thus: "For what is our hope, our joy, or *crown* of rejoicing. Are not even *ye* in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" 1 Thess. ii. 19. Here believers are called a crown of the apostles, because they were an ornament, an honor to their ministry. As a crown was regarded as an ornament and honor to the victor, so believers were an ornament and an honor to the apostles of truth. This language is highly figurative. As though Paul had said: "If my labors are now to be terminated, and my course on earth to be finished, I have the consciousness of having labored faithfully in the cause of the Master; the gospel I have proclaimed will gain adherents, and believers will be multiplied to the faith of the Lord Jesus. I have sowed seed which will bear fruit even to a hundred fold; bands of believers will rise up on every hand to defend the same glorious truth, and do honor to the memory of the apostles." And so it was. Converts were multiplied to the truth, churches were established through their instrumentality, and the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. Those self-sacrificing and faithful apostles were crowned in the affections of the people, and have even now an exalted and honorable place in the affections of every Christian heart. Though Paul

might die by the hand of the persecutor, yet the *day* was approaching when persecution would cease and divine truth would triumph, and faithful and devoted bands of Christians would testify to the fidelity of the apostles, who, figuratively speaking, would constitute a crown of righteousness; that is, they would be an ornament and honor to the apostles. They would be living witnesses to the truth as it is in Jesus, and would bear testimony to the faithfulness of the apostles, whom they would respect and honor, and whose teachings would be authoritative, and whose virtues would be worthy of emulation. These would remember the work of the apostles, and would constitute their joy and crown of righteousness.

ATTAIN UNTO THE RESURRECTION.

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."—PHILIPPIANS iii. 11.

Many confused and erroneous ideas have been entertained in regard to the meaning of these words of the apostle. They have frequently been urged in support of the theory, that human effort is essential to the resurrection of man to a life of immortal blessedness. But there is neither sound sense, correct philosophy, nor Scripture evidence to warrant such a conclusion. We are nowhere informed by the inspired penman, that the resurrection state could be attained, or reached by human effort; and the apostle teaches this, if he has any reference to the immortal resurrection of man from the dead.

The Scriptures nowhere teach that the resurrection from the dead can be attained by human agency. Man can do nothing by which he can merit a future state of conscious existence. The present life is the free gift of God, and a future life will also be the unpurchased gift of our heavenly Father; and not of works, lest any man should

boast. Paul never designed to teach that he could attain unto the resurrection of the dead by his own effort! But he did distinctly teach this, if his language applies to the literal resurrection of man from the dead, than which nothing can be more absurd!

What resurrection, then, is here referred to by the apostle? Evidently, a moral resurrection — a spiritual resuscitation and quickening through the power of the truth, and individual application of christian principles to the heart and life. The context shows this. Paul is speaking words of encouragement to his brethren, and refers to the sacrifices he had made to become a follower of Christ, and urges them to renewed fidelity and consecration to the cause of Christ. He speaks of the superior excellency of the gospel of Christ, and of his readiness to abandon everything else for him; he counted all things as refuse that he might win Christ; "and be found in him not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

We do not understand the apostle to express a wish here to suffer on the cross as did Jesus, and literally to be made "conformable unto his death." All he meant was, to express a desire to be gov-

erned by the same self-sacrificing spirit that Christ manifested in the execution of his heavenly mission, and to "attain" a high state of moral perfection and purity, and to live *above the world*, as though he was already in the resurrection state. He expressed a desire to be uplifted above the power of appetite, and the temptations of the flesh, and to be dead to sin, and constantly alive unto God.

The same sentiment is expressed in the 6th chapter of Romans, 6th verse as follows: "Knowing this that the old man is *crucified* with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, and henceforth we should not serve sin." When the "old man" was crucified, and the apostle put on the "new man," he knew Christ and the power of his resurrection; he was elevated to a high plane of christian attainment, and he desired to be animated by the self-sacrificing spirit of Christ, and made conformable unto his death, that he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead; or, in other words, that he might reach such a high plane of moral purity and christian excellence, that he would be transformed into the image of Christ, and even into the likeness of Christ's resurrection. He expressed a desire to be *dead unto sin, and alive unto God*, and to live as though he were already in the resurrection state.

Paul had not then attained that exalted position; for he adds: "Not as though I had already attained, neither were already perfect, but I follow after,

if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Paul, of course, did not intend by this language to disclaim the fact that he had not already attained the literal resurrection from the dead, for all know that; but he designed to say that he had not yet attained that high and exalted state of moral perfection and purity which might be reached. While, however, he spoke in no boastful spirit, and had not attained the desirable point, and was not perfect, yet he was pressing on to the goal before him, to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The apostle here expressed an ardent desire for increased spiritual exaltation, a freedom from sin, and a state of moral purity resembling the resurrection state. The same sentiment is expressed in other language, when he says: "How shall we that are *dead to sin*, live any longer therein?" Again he says, that we should "walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together, in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." We understand the apostle to express a desire to reach a high state of christian perfection, a moral and spiritual exaltation and resurrection. For that he earnestly labored, and suffered the loss of all things, and for that should we all diligently strive.

FEARFUL JUDGMENTS OF GOD.

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—HEBREWS X. 31.

All men, strictly speaking, are in the hands of God. He has created all, He upholds and sustains all by the word of his power, and He supplies the wants of all by his own bountiful hand. He scatters blessings along our pathway, and the arms of his everlasting love are continually about us. If all now are in his hands, how can it be said to be "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God?"

In different senses, people are said to be in the "hands of God." Speaking after the manner of men, "to fall into the hands of the living God," was to suffer the merited retribution which his hands inflict. As every transgression and disobedience received from the hands of God a just recompense of reward, the judgments thus inflicted are said to be "fearful." And as these judgments for disobedience and iniquity come from the hands of the Almighty, it is said to be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God, or under the divine judgments; or, in other words, to experience the

fearful retributions for sin which God inflicts on the transgressor.

Hence we read that "the hand of the Lord was against them to destroy them." Deut. ii. 15. Of the disobedient Israelites it was said that "the hand of the Lord was against them for evil." Judges ii. 15. That is, the Lord punished them for their iniquity. When the Lord smote the people of Ashdod with disease, or punished them for their sins, it is said the "hand of the Lord was heavy upon them." 1 Samuel v. 6. And again, at the 9th verse, we read that "the hand of the Lord was against the city with a very great destruction." The people suffered fearful judgments. When the Israelites gained a signal victory over the Philistines by the help of the Lord, it is said "the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines." 1 Samuel vii. 13. When the children of Israel had suffered an adequate punishment for their iniquity, it was said that "they received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins." Isaiah xl. 2.

The judgments which came upon Jerusalem, upon Sodom and Gomorrah, upon Tyre and Sidon, were all fearful, and all regarded as coming from the hand of God; hence, it was said to be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. When the people had filled up the measure of their iniquity, it was a fearful thing to suffer for their transgressions. Cain found the retributions of God fearful indeed, when he went out a vagabond in the earth, stung by remorse as the voice of his

brother's blood cried from the ground, and in the intensity of his suffering he was constrained to cry out, "My punishment is greater than I can bear!" The antediluvians found the judgments of God fearful, when they were swept away by the waters of the sea. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah found that it was a "fearful thing" to fall under the divine judgments. When Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans, and the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, came upon that ill-fated city, and the people were visited with famine, pestilence and war, then they found, by a mournful experience, that it was a fearful thing to fall beneath the judgments of the Almighty, or into the hands of the living God.

The context shows that the apostle referred to the divine judgments to come upon Jerusalem. They saw "the day approaching." (Verse 25.) They saw the fearful judgments of God approaching—the day of judgment to that nation. Dr. Clarke comments on "that day" thus: "The time in which God would come and pour out his judgments on the Jewish nation." Those who willfully rejected Christ after they received the knowledge of the truth, and turned back again to Judaism, would be overwhelmed in the divine judgments that should devour the adversaries. (Verse 27.) Upon this Dr. Clarke remarks:

"Probably the apostle here refers to the case of the unbelieving Jews in general, as in chapter vi., to the dreadful judgment that was coming upon

them, and the burning up of their temple and city with fire."

The apostle refers to those persecuting Jews who had trodden under foot the Son of God, and persecuted his followers. They had filled up the measure of their iniquity, and were to experience merited retribution. "For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord." And again: "The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." This day of vengeance and recompense alluded to the fearful judgments which were to come upon the rebellious house of Israel, when Jerusalem should be destroyed. The day of vengeance was when these severe national judgments and calamities came upon the Jewish people. "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." Luke xxi. 22.

God punished man for his iniquity. The judgments that came upon him for sin, came from the hand of God; hence it was said to be a "fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Yet, God punishes not in revenge. "He will not cast off forever." Lam. iii. 31. "He hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all." Rom. xi. 32.

GOD A CONSUMING FIRE

"For our God is a consuming fire."—HEBREWS xii. 29.

The term *fire* was employed in different senses by the ancient Hebrews, and was a very common figure chosen to represent severe national calamities and judgments, coming upon the sinful and disobedient in this life, but never employed to set forth the retributive justice of God in the immortal world. The people were represented as being *consumed with fire*, and the land as being devoured with fire, and the inhabitants in a *furnace of fire.*

The divine judgments were threatened upon Israel in the following language: "For a FIRE is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, [*sheol*] and shall consume the earth, with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains, etc. They shall be burnt with hunger and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction." Deut. xxxii. 22–24. The judgments of God in the earth, are referred to under the figure of *fire*, and the people being burnt with hunger and devoured with burning heat.

Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, says:

"All this was fulfilled in a most remarkable manner, in the last destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, so that, of the fortifications of the city, not one stone was left on another."

Severe temporal judgments are spoken of under the figure of fire in the following passage: "For there is a *fire* gone out of Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon; it hath consumed Ar of Moab, and the lords of the high places of Arnon." Num. xxi. 28. Similar phraseology is employed by David to represent the judgments of God upon the wicked in this life. "A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about." Psalms xcvii. 3.

In this sense God is spoken of as a "consuming fire," because He brought judgments upon the disobedient and sinful. In the prophecy of Isaiah, the destruction of Babylon is spoken of under the same figure: "Behold they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them: they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame." Isaiah xlvii. 14. That is, they shall not escape the judgments of God; for verily, "He is a God that judgeth in the earth." Psalms lviii. 11.

In the passage under consideration, Paul uses nearly the same language which Moses had employed when addressing the children of Israel, as recorded in Deut. iv. 24: "For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God." Moses exhorts the Israelites to observe God's commandments and walk in his ways, and warns them

against idolatry as a sin; God has forbidden and would justly punish, hence He was said to be a consuming fire. The apostle in the context is speaking of things pertaining to the new dispensation, and of Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. If those living under the old economy, did not escape a merited retribution, "much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaketh from heaven." Verse 25. God is still a consuming fire; He still maintains a moral government and punishes iniquity. He is said to be a consuming fire, because He is the author of those judgments which came upon the disobedient Jews, and destroyed their national existence, or consumed their national life. God punishes iniquity under the new economy as He did under the old dispensation. When the divine judgments came upon the Jewish nation, and the people were visited with famine, war and destruction, God was said to *consume* them, inasmuch as his judgments were upon them. In this sense He was spoken of as consuming the sinful because He punished them; thus: "I will send a sword after them till I have consumed them." Jer. ix. 16. "God consumed the wicked by the sword, by famine and by pestilence." Jer. xiv. 12.

When, in the course of Providence, famine, pestilence and war came upon the Jewish nation, and they were overwhelmed in destruction, God was again called a consuming fire. This is the meaning of Paul's language, as we understand it. It

had reference to the judgments of God in the earth, and not to the endless ruin of a single member of the human family.

We present the following concurring testimony from Dr. Clarke:

"*Not to the earth only, but also heaven:* probably referring to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and the total abolition of the political and ecclesiastical constitution of the Jews, the one being signified by the *earth*, the other by *heaven;* for the Jewish state and worship are frequently thus termed in the prophetic writings.

For our God is a consuming fire: the apostle quotes Deut. iv. 24, and by doing so he teaches us this great truth — that sin under the gospel is as abominable in God's sight, as it was under the law, and that the man who does not labor to serve God with the principle, and in the way already prescribed, will find that fire to consume him which would otherwise have consumed his sins."—*Com. in loc.*

IMPOSSIBLE TO RENEW THEM.

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."—HEBREWS vi. 4–6.

The chief difficulty to a correct understanding of this language of the apostle, has arisen from the supposition that he intended to teach that it was absolutely impossible to renew those to repentance, who had once tasted of the joys of Christian salvation, and afterwards turned away from the truth. Divine truth and grace were given especially to enlighten the mind and purify the heart, and man, therefore, cannot become so lost in sin and blinded by error, that God's grace cannot enlighten and save him — that it is absolutely impossible for God to restore his moral perceptions, quicken his understanding and reclaim him from his iniquity. The disciples of Christ, even after they had been enlightened and tasted the heavenly gift, fell away from the truth, and yet they were renewed again to repentance. One denied the Savior, and another betrayed him, and all forsook him and fled; they

became faithless and unbelieving, and Jesus upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart. But they were again renewed unto repentance and received their Lord and Master again. Judas repented that he had betrayed innocent blood, and Peter that he had denied his Lord.

The apostle designed to teach no more than this: that when persons had been once enlightened by the truth, and tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, and had been convinced of the nature and divinity of Christ's mission; if such should "fall away," it would be *more difficult* to reclaim or *renew* them again unto repentance, than to convince them first of the excellency of the gospel — not because the testimony in favor of the truth would be insufficient, but because the mind would be full of prejudice, and such would be in a position unfavorable to examine testimony and weigh evidence impartially — having apostatized, they would have no disposition to receive the word and be renewed again to repentance. If it is absolutely *impossible* for an individual to repent, of course, he is relieved from all moral obligation to make any effort in that direction.

This scripture was originally addressed to those who were in danger of apostatizing from the faith they had embraced. They were in danger of "falling away" from the truth, and returning to the beggarly elements of Judaism. This language was addressed to believing Jews in and about

Jerusalem, a very few years previous to the destruction of that city by the Romans. Paul exhorted the brethren to be faithful unto the end, to remain steadfast and immovable. He had witnessed the apostacy of some and the coldness and indifference of others; hence, he exhorted the Hebrew brethren, "not to forsake the assembling of themselves together," after the manner of some, but to be true disciples of the cross, and never swerve from the truth, so much the more as they saw the day approaching. The brethren were exhorted to fidelity in the good work, inasmuch as it would be very difficult to renew again to repentance such as should fall away. It would be nearly impossible for any human being to present convincing testimony to the minds of such, and bring them back again to the faith of the gospel. It is more difficult to create renewed interest in the heart of a man, after he had abandoned the truth and lost all interest in the religious themes and institutions, and "fallen away" from his first love, than to bring him to the knowledge of the truth at first.

This is what Paul teaches in relation to Christianity. When a man has embraced the gospel, and tasted the joys of the world to come, if he should abandon the truth, apostatize from the faith and go back to Judaism — called the beggarly elements of the world — it would be far more difficult to renew him again to repentance, than to convince him of the truth at first.

The passage before us shows how hard it is to

regain a good position when once abandoned; how difficult it is to be brought back to the way of truth and right, when once forsaken, not that it is absolutely impossible for God to change the mind and convert the soul, but that it is extremely difficult for man to present any argument which will turn such from their errors. In addition to what we have said, we ask the reader's attention to the following, from eminent orthodox divines, in corroboration of what we have said. Dr. Macknight comments as follows:

"The apostle does not mean that it is impossible for God to renew a second time by repentance, an apostate; but that it is impossible for the ministers of Christ to convert a second time to the faith of the gospel, one who, after being made acquainted with all the proofs by which God has thought fit to establish Christ's mission, shall allow himself to think him an impostor, and renounce the gospel. The apostle, knowing this, was anxious to give the Hebrews just views of the ancient oracles, in the hope that it would prevent them from apostatizing."

Rosenmuller, a celebrated German theologian, says:

"*Adunaton*, in this place, does not mean absolutely *impossible*, but rather a thing so difficult, that it may be nearly impossible; thus we are accustomed to say of very many things, in common conversation."

WRATH OF GOD

"For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."—COLOSSIANS iii. 6.

In the Scriptures frequent reference is made to the "wrath of God." "Thou sendest forth thy wrath which consumed them as stubble." Ex. xv. 7. "My wrath shall wax hot." Ex. xxii. 24. "The day of the Lord cometh with wrath." Rev. vi. 17. Such language has been misunderstood and so falsely interpreted, as to give to God the character of a merciless tyrant. Our heavenly Father has been represented as imbibing a hatred towards his own erring offspring more terrible than ever dwelt in the bosom of the most depraved mortal that ever walked the earth. Hence, much of the worship and religious service in which people have engaged, has been designed to affect God, to placate his wrath, secure his favor and reconcile Him to man. Such views of God and religion have done great harm to Christianity and turned many away in disgust from the Father of mercies, the God of our salvation. God cannot be angry, malignant, revengeful, and full of wrath, in any sense in which man is angry and wrathful for "an-

ger resteth in the bosom of fools." Eccles. vii. 9. And we are commanded to "cease from anger and forsake wrath." Psalms xxxvii. 8. Therefore God cannot indulge in any such sinful emotion himself.

When we read of the "wrath of God," we understand the language to be used in a figurative sense, to denote God's disapprobation of sin, his aversion to transgression, and his retributive justice. In the Scriptures, God is spoken of as a man, having the organization and passions of mortal beings; but all such language should be understood figuratively. We read of the "arm," and "hand," and "fingers" of the Almighty; of the "right arm" of the Lord, and of his "heart" and "breath;" that he "sits," and "rides," and "walks;" but these are all figurative expressions, adapted to the condition and circumstances of the ancient Hebrews, indicating the poverty of language in which ideas adapted to the comprehension of the people were conveyed, and were never designed to be understood literally.

To express the divine approbation of any course of action, expressions similar to those employed by the people for a like purpose, must have been introduced, and therefore to represent God's disapproval of sin and its merited retribution, He is spoken of as being "angry" with the sinner, and exercised by wrathful emotions. Merited retribution indicated to their undeveloped and uncultivated minds, "anger" and "wrath" in God. When nations and individuals brought upon themselves

swift destruction, pestilence, famine and war, such punishment was spoken of as a display of God's anger and wrath. It was so with Babylon, Sodom and Gomorrah, with Tyre and Sidon. Hence, says Paul, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."

Macknight has the following:

"Thus, many words of the primitive language of mankind must have a twofold signification. According to the one signification, they denote ideas of sense, and according to the other they denote ideas of intellect. So that although these words were the same in respect of their sound, they were really different words in respect of their signification; and to mark that difference, after the nature of language came to be accurately investigated, the words which denoted the ideas of sense, when used to express the ideas of intellect, were called by critics *metaphors*, from a Greek word which signifies *to transfer;* because these words so used, were carried away from their original meaning to a different one, which, however, had some resemblance to it.

Having in the Scriptures these and many other examples of bold metaphors, the natural effect of the poverty of the ancient language of the Hebrews, why should we be either surprised or offended with the bold figurative language in which the Hebrews expressed their conceptions of the divine nature and government? Theirs was not a philosophical language, but the primitive speech of an uncultivated race of men, who by words and phrases taken from objects of sense, endeavored to express *their* notions of matters

which cannot be distinctly conceived by the human mind, and far less expressed in human language. Wherefore they injure the Hebrews who affirm, that they believed the Deity to have a body, consisting of members of the human body, because in their sacred writings, the eyes, the ears, the hands, and the feet of God, are spoken of; and because He is represented as acting with these members after the manner of man.

'The voice of the Lord God walking in the garden.' Gen. iii. 8. 'The Lord is a man of war;' 'Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed,' etc.; 'The blast of thy nostrils.' Exod. xv. 3–6–8. 'Smoke out of his nostrils;' 'Fire out of his mouth;' 'Darkness under his feet;' 'He rode;' and 'Did fly.' Psalms xviii. 8, 9, 10.

In like manner they injure the Hebrews who affirm they thought God was moved by anger, jealousy, hatred, revenge, grief, and other human passions, because in their Scriptures it is said: 'It repented the Lord;' 'It grieved Him.' Gen. vi. 6. 'A jealous God.' Ex. xx. 5. 'The wrath of the Lord.' Num. xi. 33. 'I hate.' Prov. viii. 13. 'The indignation of the Lord;' 'His fury.' Isa. xxxiv. 2. 'God is jealous;' 'Revengeth and is furious;' 'Will take vengeance;' and 'He reserveth wrath.' Nahum i. 2.

They also injure the Hebrews who affirm that they believe the Deity subject to human infirmity, because it is said, 'God rested.' Gen. ii. 2. 'The Lord smelled.' viii. 21. 'I will go down and see,' and 'if not, I will know.' xviii. 20. 'He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh;' 'Shall have them in derision.' Psalms ii. 4. 'The Lord awaked,' etc. lxxviii. 65.

These and the like expressions are highly *metaphorical*, and imply nothing more but that in the

divine mind and conduct, [to human perception,] there is somewhat analagous to, and resembling the sensible objects and the human affections, on which these metaphorical expressions are founded. If from the passages of Scripture in which the members of the human body are ascribed to the Deity, it is inferred that the ancient Hebrews believed the Deity hath a body of the same form with the human body, we must conclude they believed the Deity to be a tree, with spreading branches and leaves which afforded an agreeable shade; and a great fowl, with feathers and wings; and even a rock, because He is so called. Deut. xxxii. 15; Psalms xvii. 8; xviii. 2–31; and xci. 4."—*Macknight on the Epistle, Essay* viii., *Sec.* 1.

We should remember that the sentiments of the ancient Hebrews come to us clothed in oriental costume, and bold metaphorical expressions are employed to communicate their ideas. We read of the floods clapping their hands, and the hills skipping like lambs. This, of course, was highly figurative language. And so when we read of the wrath of God, we understand the language to be used in a figurative sense, to set forth the righteous retribution of God in the earth. Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward. The antediluvian world was swept away by a flood. Jerusalem was sacked by the Romans. Pharaoh and his hosts were swallowed up in the sea, and the cities of the plain were destroyed by divine judgments; and thus was the wrath of God revealed against the ungodliness and and unrighteousness of men.

THE JUDGMENT DAY.

"It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city."—MATTHEW x. 15.

"It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you."—MATTHEW xi. 22.

Many erroneous ideas obtain in the Christian world in regard to the "day of judgment" referred to in these passages. It has been long taught that there will be a day of general judgment in the future, immortal world, when all men will receive their final sentence from the Almighty, and some will be acquitted and pronounced worthy of everlasting bliss, and others will be condemned to regions of despair, where they will suffer as long as the pillars of God's throne shall stand. But the Scriptures, we are happy to say, furnish no evidence in support of such a sentiment. The Bible speaks of a judgment, but not in eternity. We nowhere read in the Scriptures that God will judge man in the resurrection world, but that He judges him in the earth. We never read of mankind *going* into the future world to be judged; but that that God and Christ *come* to this world to judge man. (Ps. xcvi. 13.) "Verily He is a God that

judgeth in the earth." Ps. lviii. 11. Again: "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth." Isa. xlii. 4. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John v. 22. Hence, Jesus said: "For *judgment* I am come into this world." John ix. 39. Jesus came to establish his kingdom of truth and righteousness in the earth; and more than eighteen hundred years ago it was said: "Now is the judgment of this world." John xii. 31. "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of his judgment is come."

In all these passage, not the least hint is given that God judges man in eternity. In what sense then shall we understand the language, "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the day of judgment than for you." It means simply that the divine judgments which came upon Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, severe as they were, were more tolerable, or, less severe, than the judgments which came upon the Jewish people, after they had filled up the measure of their iniquity. In this way, Jesus sought to impress upon the people a sense of their guilt, and indicated the severity of the divine judgments about to come upon the rebellious house of Israel. The judgments which came upon Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, were more tolerable than those that came upon Jerusalem. Greater calamity came upon the Jewish people for their sins, than came upon Tyre and Sidon. Hence, we read as follows,

in Lamentations iv. 6: "For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is *greater* than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown in a moment and no hand stayed on her." Here a comparison is instituted between the punishment of Sodom and Jerusalem; the punishishment of the Jewish people was greater; the calamity which came upon Tyre and Sidon was more tolerable, or less severe.

This has regard to national judgments and temporal ruin. It cannot refer to endless punishment, as human creeds teach, for no punishment could be greater than that. If Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah suffered endlessly, then the punishment of the daughter of my people could not be *greater*. But no reference was made to endless punishment. When Jerusalem was destroyed, there was a time of trouble such as never been before nor ever should be again. (Matt. xxiv. 21.) All other judgments, compared with this, were less severe, or more tolerable. We are able to confirm and sustain this interpretation by learned orthodox commentators.

HAMMOND.—"I assure you, the punishment or destruction that will light upon that city will be such, that the destruction of Sodom shall appear to have been more tolerable than that."—*See Note on Matt.* iii. 2.

Again he says:

"Shall be more tolerable for Sodom in that day: i. e., not in the day of judgment to come, for that

belongs to each particular person, not whole cities together, but in that day of the kingdom of God, than for that refractory city. God's dealing with Sodom in the day of their destruction with fire and brimstone, shall be acknowledged to have been more supportable, than his dealing with such contumacious, impenitent cities of Judea."—*Com. on Matt.* iii. 2.

PEARCE.—"That is, in the day of the destruction of the Jewish state, called the *coming of the Son of man.* (Verse 23.) The sense of this verse seems to be this: That, which formerly befell Sodom and Gomorrah, was more tolerable, than what shall befall this city. That the day of judgment here mentioned is to be thus understood, appears from what is said concerning Capernaum in chapter xi. 23, compared with verses 22–24, of the same chapter."

WAKEFIELD.—"*In the day of vengeance, punishment*, or *trial.* This is undoubtedly the genuine sense of the phrase, which has not the least reference to to the day of general judgment. All that our Savior intends to say is, that when the temporal calamities of that place come upon it, they will be more severe than even those of Sodom and Gomorrah. See this phrase employed in precisely the same meaning by the LXX., in Prov. vi. 34, where, instead of *kriseos*, *Aquila* and *Theodation* have *ekidkeseos;* Isa. xxxiv. 8, and my Commentary on this place. Our Savior, I apprehend, had Jerusalem principally in view in this declaration."

BRING THEE INTO JUDGMENT.

"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."—MATTHEW xii. 36.

"For all these things, God will bring thee into judgment."—ECCLESIASTES xi. 9

Those who misapprehend the true meaning of these passages, urge them in proof of the sentiment which teaches that all mankind will be assembled before the bar of God, in the resurrection life, there put upon trial, that every idle word will be recounted, and every deed, good and bad, brought forward and examined, and that in this way, the fate of every soul will be decided at the judgment day.

This doctrine, however, finds no support in the Word of God. The Bible nowhere teaches that man is *going* into the future state to be judged. It teaches a different sentiment. "Verily he is a God that judgeth *in the earth*." Ps. lviii. 11. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John v. 22. "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come *into the world*." John xii. 31.

The expression, "*the* day of judgment," found in

the text before us, does not so read in the original. It does not mean a particular day in the immortal state of existence. It does not assert that the judgment is in the future life. This is assumed. Nothing is here said about the condition of man in the resurrection world. The passage does not say that the day of judgment is after death. This is taken for granted, not proved.

The day of judgment here means *a* day of punishment or righteous retribution; the same as when it is said, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the (*a*) day of judgment than for that city. (Matt. x. 15.) Dr. Adam Clarke, commenting on this passage, says that this means *a day* in which God should send punishment on that particular city, or on that person for their crimes. So in the passage before us, the day of judgment means a day of punishment. The definite article *the* is not found in the original text; hence, it means *a day* of punishment, or a time when those referred to should receive a merited chastisement. The expression "idle words," does not fully express the meaning. It is used in the sense of wicked, sinful, calumnious language. The meaning is that such wickedness would receive merited retribution. A day of punishment awaited those who indulged in sinful, blasphemous language. Jesus had just before been speaking of those who had committed blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, by affirming that he had an unclean spirit, and performed his miracles through the

agency of the prince of devils. This was the sin against the Holy Ghost. They had spoken falsely of Jesus. They had not simply uttered *idle* words, but bold blasphemy, which indicated great moral depravity, and for all this, a righteous retribution awaited them, a day of judgment, or punishment. That day of retribution came upon the people referred to, a day of tribulation and anguish, a time of swift destruction, when the judgments of God came upon that sinful and disobedient race. The sentiment taught is, that all sin will be punished — that there is a day of chastisement for all iniquity. The passage in Ecclesiastes teaches that if the young pass beyond the bounds of propriety, and indulge in unlawful and sinful ways, violate the laws of their natures, and transgress the laws of virtue and uprightness, then a day of retribution awaits them, they will be punished for all their evil ways and sinful indulgences and offenses; for all these things God will bring them to judgment. He will visit their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with stripes, though his loving kindness He will not utterly take from them nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. The day of judgment is the day when sin is punished. "Verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth." "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner." Prov. xi. 31.

LOSE HIS OWN SOUL.

"For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—MATTHEW xvi. 26.

The word here rendered "soul," should have been rendered "life," as admitted by many of the most learned biblical divines, among whom we may mention Dr. Adam Clarke, the distinguished Methodist commentator. In fact, the original word occurs in the preceding verse, and is there rendered "life." "For whosoever will lose his *life* for my sake, shall find it."

Jesus had just spoken of the dangers which those would encounter, who should make a public profession of his religion by taking up their cross and following him. They would receive such ill treatment and persecution, that it would be like taking their lives in their hands and going forth to meet the enemy. The Savior knew well that this persecution would prevent some from embracing his religion, while others would turn away from him and abandon his cause, in order to escape persecution and save their lives. But such would even lose their lives; hence the expression, "whosoever will *save* his life, or attempt to save it, by

joining hands with the persecutors, will lose it. And whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it."

As though Jesus had said: "He who will accept my teachings, and obey my commands and instruction, and fearlessly meet danger and persecution, shall *save* his life; he shall be saved from destruction, when severe national judgments shall fall upon the persecuting Jew."

In the light of these suggestions, we readily apprehend the meaning of the passage under consideration. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" As though the Savior had said: "Suppose you reject my truth and gain the wealth and honors of the world, where is the *profit*, as you will certainly be overwhelmed in the terrible calamities about to come upon this sinful generation! Even admit that you will lose your life at the hand of the persecutor, for embracing my doctrine and religion, you can but lose it, and if you reject me, you certainly will lose it, hence there is nothing *gained* by rejecting me."

This view of the subject is sustained by the parallel passages, recorded in the 9th chapter of Luke: "For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose himself, or be cast away?"

Similar phraseology is found in the 10th chapter of Matthew, upon which Dr. Adam Clarke remarks as follows: "He that findeth his life shall *lose* it, was literally fulfilled in Archbishop Cranmer. He

confessed Christ against the devil, and his eldest son, the Pope. He was ordered to be burnt; to save his life, he recanted, and was, notwithstanding, burnt." He denied the truth to save his life, and then he lost it! Learned orthodox divines of different names take this view of the subject:

CAMPBELL.—"*With the forfeit of his life;* English translation, *Lose his own soul. Forfeit* comes nearer the import of the original word, which Doddridge has endeavored to convey by a circumlocution, *should be punished with the loss of his life.* But the chief error in the English translation lies in changing, without necessity, the word answering to *psuche*, calling it, in the preceding verse, *life*, and in this, *soul.* The expressions are proverbial, importing, it signifies nothing how much a man gain, if it be at the expense of his life."

CLARKE.—"*Lose his own soul;* or *lose his life.* On what authority many have translated the word *psuche*, in the 25th verse, *life*, and in this verse, *soul*, I know not; but am certain it means *life*, in both places. If a man should gain the whole world, its riches, honors, and pleasures, and lose his *life*, what would all these profit him, seeing they can only be enjoyed during *life.*"

The legitimate sentiment here taught is, that we should not be so entirely absorbed in the pursuits of the world as to injure our physical constitutions and hasten ourselves into the grave. What does such a man *gain?* He has been consecrated to the world, amassed a large property, but *lost his life.* This we regard as the primary meaning of the passage under consideration.

SON OF PERDITION.

"While I was with them [the disciples] in the world, I kept them in my name; those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is *lost*, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled."—JOHN xvii. 12.

In whatever sense, Judas, the individual referred to here, was *lost*, that condition was essential to the fulfillment of the Scriptures. But, who will say that he must be consigned to endless perdition that the scripture might be fulfilled? We are not aware that any scripture required the endless punishment of Judas in order that it be fulfilled. Such an interpretation is too manifestly erroneous to require a moment's time to refute it.

The meaning of the passage is clearly this: while Christ was with the disciples, he kept them faithful to his cause, devoted to the work which engaged his attention; and what is meant by his having lost none but the son of perdition, is, that none had abandoned his religion, except Judas, who betrayed him. Long before, one had been spoken of, who should lift up his heel against him. (See Psalms xli. 9.) And when Judas turned away from his Lord and Master, that scripture was fulfilled, which

declared that "he that eateth bread with me hath lifteth up his heel against me."

When this disciple abandoned his Lord and Master, he was *lost*—lost to truth—lost in sin,—and because he was thus lost, he was called the son of perdition. It referred simply to his apostacy from the Christian faith, without regard to the future condition of Judas. Son of apostacy, means an apostate. Professor Stuart says:

"The word *son* was a favorite among the Hebrews, and was employed by them to designate a great variety of relations. The son of any thing, according to Oriental idiom, may be either, what is closely connected with it, dependent on it, like it, the consequence of it, worthy of it, etc. The son of eight days; that is, the child of eight days old: of a hundred years; that is, the person who is a hundred years of age: the son of my sorrow; that is, the one who has caused me distress: son of valor; that is, bold, brave: son of Belial; that is, a worthless man: son of wickedness; that is, wicked: son of a murderer; that is, a murderous person: son of death; that is, one who deserves death: son of thunder; that is, a man of powerful energetic eloquence or strength: son of peace; that is, a peaceable man."

Son of perdition, means an individual in an apostate condition—lost in sin.

We quote from "Paige's Selections," the following from eminent commentators upon this subject:

WHITBY.—"*And none of them is lost:* i. e., either by temporal death, (chapter xviii. 9); or by falling off from me, but the son of perdition, i. e.,

Judas, worthy of perdition. So a *son of death* is worthy of it, (2 Sam. xii. 5,) and *ethnos apoleias* is a nation fit to be destroyed. (Eccl. xvi. 9; Matt. xxiii. 15, and the note on Eph. ii. 2.")

Dr. Whitby does not say what he understands by *perdition;* but the word *apoleias*, in the passage he quotes above, is precisely the word rendered *perdition* in the text. From the manner in which he uses that passage, he seems to have understood the word to imply temporal destruction, and nothing more.

ROSENMULLER.—"No one is ignorant that Judas is here intended the betrayer of Christ, and who had fallen off from him. *Apoleia*, (perdition,) therefore, as the preceding words teach, in this place, seems to indicate a defection from Jesus, the teacher; as in 2 Thess. ii. 2, where the phrase *o uios apoleias* (the son of perdition) differs very little from *o uios amartias*, (the son of transgression,) and is used concerning a noted impostor, who persuaded many to a defection from the Christian religion."

HAMMOND.—"All this while of my continuing among them, I have labored, by revealing thy will to them, to confirm them, and also to preserve them from danger, and it hath succeedeth well; of all those who were, by thy preventing grace, so prepared, as that they came to me, and undertook my service, none have carried or fallen off, (see chapter xviii. 9, and here verse 15,) but only the wicked traitor prophesied of. Psalm cix."

JUDGMENT TO COME.

"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."—ACTS xxiv. 25.

Many erroneously suppose that Felix trembled because Paul announced the awful doom that awaited him, in the immortal state of existence. This, however, is entirely assumed, as there is not the least particle of proof to sustain such a sentiment. We have the expression here, "judgment to come," but it does not say that this "judgment" was after the resurrection of man from the dead, nor in the future world. And when we understand correctly the language originally employed by the apostle, we shall see that Felix trembled, not because he feared a judgment day in the infinite ages to come and was in danger of endless perdition, but because the judgment threatened, and punishment announced was *nigh at hand.* The original expression, *kai tou krimatos, tou mellontes esesthai,* here rendered *judgment to come,* would be better translated by *the judgment about to be,* or soon to come, or "impending judgment." Dr. Howesis, in his translation of the New Testament, renders

the original as follows: "And as he discoursed of righteousness, and temperance, *and judgment which is to be revealed*, Felix, being greatly terrified, replied," etc. The following criticisms will help us to understand this and many other passages.

Parkhurst says, "*mello* signifies, with an infinitive following, to be about to do a thing, *futurus sum*. (Matt. ii. 13; xvi. 27.) Both the verb and participle are in the New Testament joined with the infinitive future, as *esesthai*. So likewise in the purest Greek writers." In his note on Matthew iii. 7, Dr. Campbell says: "*Mellon* often means not only *future*, but *near*. There is just such a difference between *estai*, and *mellei esesthai*, in Greek, as there is between *it will be*, and *it is about to be* in English. This holds particularly in threats and warnings." These valuable criticisms are from eminent and learned men in the sacrificial church.

In the passage under consideration, *mello* is used with an infinitive, and according to these critics should be translated *about to be*. And Dr. Campbell says, "this holds particularly in threats and warnings," and certainly Paul was warning Felix of impending judgment. Sometimes *mello* with an infinitive is rendered *about to do* a thing, as in Acts iii. 3: "Who seeing Peter and John *about to go* into the temple." So in Matthew xvi. 27: "For the Son of man shall come (*is about to come*) in the glory of his Father with his angels," etc. So in the passage before us. When Paul reasoned of

"judgment to come," *mello* being used here with an infinitive, it means judgment *about to be*, or to come. Dr. Campbell says, *mello* often means not only *future*, but *near;* and as this holds good "particularly in *threats and warnings*," it is reasonable to suppose that Paul spoke of a judgment *near at hand*, and not of a day of future general judgment in the immortal world. Such a judgment would not have given Felix any special anxiety, particularly had he been told that by repentance he could easily escape the penalty of God's law! Such a statement is not designed to excite any alarm. There is nothing in the passage to indicate that Paul reasoned about a judgment to come in the future world, but its very structure shows that reference was made to a judgment *soon to come—near at hand.*

Let us remember the circumstances under which this language was uttered. Felix, while procurator of Judea, became, as Josephus tells us, so captivated with Drusilla, the wife of another man, that he, by skillful intrigue, persuaded her to abandon her husband and marry him. Accordingly she acted ill, eloped from her lawful husband, and at the time Paul addressed Felix, he was living in adultery with this woman. Paul discoursed very faithfully to this vile man. He did not tell this couple of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, but of *their sins*, and the divine judgments which hung over them, and were about to come upon them. He reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and

judgment *about to come.* Paul used the word righteousness, here, to rebuke the injustice and cruelty practised by Felix. When Paul discoursed of *temperance*, he meant restraint from all the bad passions in which Felix had reveled. The word is used here as being opposed to incontinence. Paul discoursed upon chastity, and preached right *at* Felix, who trembled before the rebukes of this apostle. Whitby says that "Felix practised uncleanness with greediness."

After exposing his injustice, and pointing out his iniquity, Paul very naturally spoke of the punishment which awaited him for his sins, or the *judgment about to come.* As we have no report of his discourse, and as the Bible gives no particulars, save that Paul spoke of righteousness, temperance, and *judgment about to come*, we are left to reason as best we may, in regard to the punishment soon to come upon this wicked man.

Paul may have referred to the national calamities and judgments then soon to come upon the Jewish people, or he might have referred to some signal display of divine judgment to overtake Felix, like that which came upon Herod, when eaten up by worms, or he might have spoken of the legal punishment to which his iniquity exposed him. In absence of direct proof, we cannot assert with positiveness what punishment was alluded to, but whatever it was, it was soon to come; it was a judgment which was *about to be*, or which was *near at hand.*

Paul may have referred to the national judgments about to overwhelm the Jews, and the immediate kindred of his captivating but wicked wife. Drusilla was a Jewess, and, of course, any calamity coming upon her nation and kindred, must have excited and alarmed both herself and her vile companion. The punishment about to come upon the Jews, was a merited chastisement for their sins. Any such announcement would naturally terrify and alarm them. Paul frequently alluded to this awful judgment, then nigh at hand; the day was fast approaching, and if this subject engaged his attention on this occasion, we can see that Felix had good cause to fear and tremble. Paul knew that the wrath, or judgment of God was revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; he knew that for every transgression and disobedience there was a just recompense of reward, both for individuals and nations. And Paul undoubtedly presented these solemn facts to the mind of Felix, who had abandoned himself to vile passions and was justly exposed to merited retribution. Divine judgments were about to come upon the Jewish nation, which would involve the Roman empire itself in distress; hence we read, "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth *distress of nations*, with perplexity," etc. "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which *are coming on the earth*," etc. Luke xxi. 25, 26. Felix might well

have trembled, in view of those divine judgments about to come, which would bring such "distress of nations."

Felix might have feared for his own fate. All history shows him to have been a bad man, remarkable, as Horne says, for his lust and injustice. He might have been reminded of the fate of his official predecessor, Pontius Pilate, who had been governor of Judea. He was an unjust and cruel magistrate, as Josephus says, sanguinary, obstinate, and impetuous, and often disturbed the tranquility of Judea. After having put many innocent Samaritans to death, he was ordered to Rome, to give an account of his mal-administration to the emperor. He was ultimately banished to Gaul, where, it is reported, that he put an end to his own existence. In view of these circumstances, Felix, being also a bad man, might well tremble, least he too might soon be brought to account for his cruelty, injustice and mal-administration. Divine judgment had come upon others, why not upon *him?* Herod had but recently been eaten of worms and died on account of his wickedness, and why should not retribution be visited upon Felix? He had reason to fear and tremble, in view of God's retributive justice, against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men in this life. And when we remember that Paul discoursed in regard to judgment *about to come*, as the original indicates, there can be no doubt that Felix trembled, in view of earthly calamities, and not of endless perdition!

LET HIM BE UNJUST STILL.

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."—REVELATION xxii. 11.

This passage has been brought forward to prove that the state of man is unalterably fixed at death; that he remains through eternity in the same moral status in which he dies, and consequently that there is no change after death. If he is righteous at death, it is claimed that he will remain righteous still, and if he dies a sinner, he will continue a sinner still. It is moreover claimed, that this is a probationary state, and that at the day of judgment, men will be sentenced according to the character they have formed in this life. This however, is begging the question, as logicians say, and assuming as true what has never been proved. The text makes no reference to the resurrection of man, nor to his condition after death. If his immortal condition is to be determined by his moral status *at death*, how then is this life a probationary state? How can it be said that he is now forming a character for eternity? He may live a righteous life three score years and ten, and at last die in the

commission of some comparatively trivial offense, sinful and unjust, then he must remain unjust forever. These three score and ten years go for nothing. How, through a long life, did he form any character for eternity?

Again: it is believed, by those who accept this theory, that all men are totally depraved, and that children are born with depraved and corrupt natures; hence, as thousands die in infancy, it follows from their reasoning, that they must remain corrupt and filthy still. If these little children are thus depraved and filthy when they die, they must remain filthy throughout eternity, according to this view of the subject. If the common application of the text is correct, then all must remain as imperfect and sinful to all eternity, as they are when they die. As all die sinful, all must remain sinful forever! As no one is perfectly holy and free from sin in this life, so no one will be perfectly free from sin in the future world, for we are told that there no change after death.

These reflections exhibit the necessity of seeking a more rational interpretation of the text. It is important that we bear in mind, that the book of Revelation was written previous to the second overthrow of the Jewish nation, and the dispersion of the chosen people of God the second time, when they were trodden beneath the feet of the Gentiles, and were cast out as a reproach and byword among the nations of the earth, to which event the passage under consideration evidently alludes. The

civil and ecclesiastical polity was to be taken from that sinful people, and fearful destruction was approaching and even nigh at hand, such as never had been, nor ever should be again. It was perfectly natural, therefore, that such an event should be made the subject of frequent allusion and prophecy. "The time was at hand," as the Revelator declares; and the events referred to were "shortly to come to pass." Those who were unjust should be unjust still; and those who were righteous should be righteous still; that is, in that approaching desolation which was nigh at hand, those here denominated the "unjust" and "righteous" should be in opposite conditions and circumstances, separate and distinct from each other. The wicked, persecuting Jews having filled up the measure of their iniquity, punishment was inevitable, and when the overflowing scourge came upon them, and the cry was raised,—"Lord, Lord, open unto us,"—there was no opportunity left to escape the impending judgments; and though they might desire to flee from them, yet, no professions of godliness and piety could screen them, they should be filthy still. The Christians having observed the signs predicted by the Master, fled to the mountains of Pella, though scarcely saved, while the unjust and wicked Jews were kept in the city on every side; a deep trench was cast about them, which served as an impassable gulf—called a great gulf—so that there was no communication between the "righteous" and the "wicked." Their conditions for the time

being were dissimilar and fixed. There was no passing to and from the city. They that would pass from hence to you, cannot. The Christians, who are here called the "righteous," were preserved safely from the judgments that came upon the ungodly, persecuting Jew. They were then in distinct and opposite conditions. To the unjust, it was said, "Let him be unjust still," and to the righteous, "Let him be righteous still." Not that the wicked Jew should remain unjust and sinful to all eternity, for all Israel shall ultimately be saved, Jew and Gentile; for God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy on all, so that every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

TOMSON'S BEZA.—"This is not as were other prophecies, which were commanded to be hid, till the time appointed, as in Daniel xii. 4, because that these things should be quickly accomplished, and did even now begin."—*Note in loc.*

EVERLASTING BURNINGS.

"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness has surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"—ISAIAH xxxiii. 14.

This passage has no reference to the immortal state of existence, but refers to events connected with this life, and the judgments of God inflicted on the disobedient in this world. Fire was one of the most common figures among the ancients to portray divine judgments and severe national calamities, and those upon whom the ruin came, are represented as being in a *furnace of fire.* Hence we read that the Lord's "*fire* is in Zion, and his *furnace* in Jerusalem." Isaiah xxxi. 9. The divine judgments coming upon Assyria, are spoken of as a "devouring fire" as follows: "And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a *devouring fire*, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones." When the question is asked, "Who can dwell with the *devouring fire?*" we understand it to be an interrogatory assertion, that none can withstand the divine judgments in Zion; none

of the sinners in Jerusalem can escape the merited chastisements of God.

Reference is made to those judgments and national calamities in the following passage: "Behold the day cometh that shall *burn* as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble." Malachi iv. 1. When John made his appearance, he exhorted the hypocrites in Zion to flee from the wrath to come by repentance, that they might escape the impending judgments, and those who did not, should be as chaff that would be burned with unquenchable fire. Who can dwell with everlasting burnings? In other words, who can endure those calamities? Who can dwell amidst such ruin and desolation and sufferings? To dwell in "devouring fire" and "everlasting burnings" was to endure the judgments to be poured out upon Jerusalem. The terrible destruction of that ill-fated, wicked city was spoken of in the following language: "Behold, I will kindle a *fire* in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree; the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein." Ezek. xx. 47.

Again: the same fearful temporal ruin is referred to in the following manner: "But if ye will not hearken unto me, to hallow the Sabbath day and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; then will I kindle a *fire* in the gates thereof, and it shall *devour* the

palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall *not be quenched.*" Jer. xvii. 27. Here we are told that the *fire* should be kindled in Jerusalem, and *devour* the palaces thereof, and should not be quenched. This figurative language is descriptive only of temporal ruin, national desolation and destruction. Who shall dwell in this devouring fire? Who of the sinners in Zion can escape when the city is overwhelmed and destroyed? It shall not be quenched; that is, as Dr. Clarke says, till the land be *utterly ruined.* It "shall not be quenched," is an expression that means the same as "everlasting burnings," which means complete and utter destruction, national ruin. The army which advanced to destroy Jerusalem, is described as follows: "A *fire* devoureth before them, and behind them a *flame* BURNETH; the land is as a garden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them." Joel ii. 3. These passages are sufficient to illustrate the oriental style of speech, and to indicate the severe calamities coming upon the sinners in Zion, figuratively spoken of by *everlasting burnings.* This is the same as the fire not being quenched, which means complete destruction; or, as Dr. Clarke says, "till the land be utterly ruined." Ezek. xx. 48.

THE WICKED DRIVEN AWAY.

"The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death."—PROVERBS xiv. 32.

This passage has been frequently brought forward to support the doctrine that the wicked will be driven, by our heavenly Father, into the flames of hell, and tormented eternally; a doctrine which is dishonorable to God, and opposed to the teachings of his Word.

When Solomon says that the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, we understand him to mean what David meant, when he said, "the wicked shall be turned into hell." [*sheol.*] They were suddenly *driven* to destruction; quickly *turned* into *sheol.* Solomon means that the wicked shall be suddenly destroyed; their career unexpectedly ended; while they engaged in their iniquity, they would be cut off; but the righteous had hope in their death; that is, the death of the wicked gave hope to the righteous. The sudden destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea, was the hope of the children of Israel. Then the wicked were driven away in their wickedness, but the righteous had hope in their death. Haman,

who had purposed the slaughter of the Jews, was suddenly arrested in his evil course, driven away in his wickedness, and those whose destruction he had planned, had hope in his death, inasmuch as they escaped persecution and death themselves. God's people were then delivered from the hand of the oppressor, and they hoped to be free from persecution.

When Jerusalem was destroyed, and its streets were red with the blood of the slain, and the power of that proud and haughty people was taken from them by the Romans, then again were the wicked driven away in their wickedness; but their death gave hope to the righteous. The disciples of Christ were no longer persecuted by them as before, and the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. Our revolutionary fathers had hope only in the death of those who sought to enslave them and deprive them of their inalienable rights; and after they drove their wicked oppressors away in their wickedness, they had hope for American freedom. Whenever the wicked persecute the righteous, and threaten their liberty and lives, if they are thwarted in their purposes and meet with overwhelming destruction, their death brings hope to the righteous, for then they know that they are free from the persecution to which they were exposed when encompassed by their enemies. Whenever the wicked are thwarted in their designs, we have hope for the immediate triumph of the cause they oppose. And often the only hope of

the righteous is the death of the wicked. Old tyrants never take their heels from the necks of the oppressed until driven from their corrupt thrones. The righteous have hope when the wicked are driven away in their wickedness.

In this sense, the death of the wicked is an occasion of hope to the righteous. This, we think, was the meaning of Solomon when he penned the language we have considered. Though the subject had no reference to the immortal world, yet, through the teachings of the gospel, we are led to hope for the ultimate redemption of all souls, and that finally every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Bishop Warburton, speaking of this passage, says:

"The righteous hath hope that he shall be delivered from most imminent dangers. So the Psalmist says: 'Upon them that hope in his mercy, to deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine.' And again: 'Thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living.'"—*Divine Legation, Book VI., Lec.* 3.

SPIRITS IN PRISON.

"By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."—1 PETER iii. 19, 20.

Some have understood this passage to teach that Christ descended into hell, and preached to the lost spirits there. We do not think that the passage makes any allusion to the condition of the soul after death. We should bear in mind that the apostle does not say that the work here ascribed to Christ, was done between his death and resurrection, as some have taught, but it was done subsequent to his resurrection, or *after* he was quickened by the spirit. "Being put to death in the flesh, and *quickened* by the spirit; by which [spirit] also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;" or, as Wakefield translates it, "the minds of men in prison." We thus learn that he preached unto those in prison *after* he was raised from the dead.

Man is the intelligent offspring of God, and capable of being instructed in the principles of divine truth, and understanding the operations, to some extent, of the divine economy. As the divine

truths of the gospel are presented for his instruction through the appointed messengers, whom Christ commissions and sends out to proclaim his truth, it is the same as though Christ spoke himself. He speaks through his chosen servants, his appointed agents, they being authorized to speak *for him*, those who listen to *them*, hear *him*, just as those who saw and heard him, saw and heard the *Father*. (John xii. 44; xiv. 9.) Through them he preached to spirits in prison, or to "minds of men in prison."

In the Scriptures, we read of the "spirits of just men made perfect;" upon which, Dr. Adam Clarke says: "Spirits of just men mean, righteous men, or full-grown Christians." "Spirits" then, is a term synonymous with *men*. The Father of spirits means father of men in the body; and the God of the spirits of all flesh, means men in the flesh on earth. And Dr. Clarke further informs us, that these different readings in the ancient copies of the New Testament form the one given in our English version. He says that in some Greek MSS. it reads, "in spirit." And he adds the following: "I have before me one of the *first*, if not the *very first edition* of the Latin Bible, and in it the verse stands thus: "By which he came *spiritually* and preached to them that were in prison."

Who then are here referred to as being in prison, to whom Christ preached after he was quickened by the spirit, or raised from the dead?

We think that reference is here made to the Gentile world. Previous to the death and resur-

rection of Christ, the disciples were not to go into the way of the Gentiles, but were sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to the Jews only. But after Christ rose from the dead, he commissioned his apostles to go out and preach the gospel to every creature.

The darkened and benighted condition of the Gentiles was such, that they were very naturally spoken of, by a figure of speech, as being in a *prison-house*, for they were in the darkness of heathenism, and deliverance from that state of blindness and moral death is spoken of as deliverance from prison. They were in the prison-house of sin, error, blindness, and unbelief.

The Scriptures are explicit upon this point. In the 42d chapter of Isaiah, we read thus: "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth *judgment to the Gentiles*. ....I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness and will hold thine hand and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a *light of the Gentiles*, to open the *blind* eyes, to bring out the *prisoners* from the *prison*, and them that sit in darkness, out of the prison-house."

Here, the Gentiles are spoken of as having blinded minds, as being in prison, and as being brought out of their prison-house of error and unbelief. They were to be instructed and enlightened, for Christ was to be a *Light of the Gentiles*. When the glorious light of the gospel shone upon the Gentile

world, those who sat in darkness and in the region and shadow of death, saw a great light, and came out of their prison-house of darkness and sin; hence we read, "The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness." And again, the evangelical prophet makes allusion to Christ as follows: "It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the GENTILES, ...that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves." Isaiah xlix. 6–9. To the same purport is the following scripture: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath annointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives; and the *opening of the prison* to them that are bound." Isaiah lxi. 1.

All mankind were embraced in the Savior's mission, though, for some wise purpose, the truth was proclaimed to the Jews at first and confined to them; but after the resurrection of Christ, or after he was quickened by the Spirit, he commissioned his apostles to preach his gospel to every creature. The poor, benighted Gentiles were in bondage—in the prison-house of error and sin, and they were the captives to be delivered from their heathenish darkness, by the enlightening agency of christian truth. The apostle Peter—the author of our text, was to go out and preach this gospel to the Gentiles. Knowing that the prophets had spoken of

the Gentiles as being in prison, and knowing how such language was understood, it was perfectly natural for him to employ similar phraseology when speaking of the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles.

By spirits in prison, he means the minds of men in prison — in mental darkness — in spiritual bondage. They were in the prison-house of sin and ignorance and unbelief. But in God's appointed time, they who sat in the region and shadow of death saw a great light, and the captives rejoiced when deliverance was proclaimed. Hence we read: "When the Gentiles heard thereof, they were glad." And again: "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Paul was commanded to "go to the people and the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and turn them from the power of Satan unto God." Acts xxvi. 17, 18.

Christ preached to the Gentiles through his appointed servants, the messengers of his grace and truth; and when he commissioned his apostles and bade them go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, it was the same as though Christ preached himself, for he was with them, aided, guided and influenced them, and Christ was preached to the Gentiles. He was quickened by the Spirit, by which — that is, by which spirit — he, through his chosen apostles, preached to those in mental and moral darkness, to minds of men in prison.

Wakefield thinks that a comparison is here insti-

tuted between the Antediluvians and the Gentiles, thus: "By which he went and preached to the minds of men in prison, who were disobedient, as those upon whom the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." This author means, that the Gentiles were as disobedient as the Antediluvians.

The succeeding context shows that the subject had reference to the Gentiles: "For the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banqueting, and abominable idolatries, wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you; who shall give account to him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead." Upon this passage, Dr. Adam Clarke comments as follows: "They shall give account of their irregularities to him who is prepared to judge both the Jews and Gentiles."

Christ commissioned his apostles to go to the poor Gentiles, sitting in the region and shadow of death, and proclaim those truths, which should be a light of the Gentiles, and which should bring the prisoners from their prisons, and those who sat in darkness, out of their prison-house.

CAST THE BAD AWAY.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world, the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from the just; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."—MATTHEW xiii. 47–50.

This parable is found in connection with a series of parables in which Jesus represents the nature of his heavenly kingdom, the preciousness of his system of religion, the different classes of individuals who listened to his divine instructions, and the legitimate consequences which would follow a reception and rejection of his truth. Although the different illustrations which the Savior employed, are so varied as to be adapted to the comprehension of the people addressed, yet they all have a general application and similar meaning. The people were dull of apprehension, and, therefore, a variety of similitudes is introduced.

The kingdom of heaven, which is here spoken of, and which is frequently alluded to in the context, has reference to the economy of grace, or dispensation of truth, or system of religion, which

Christ came to establish in the earth. By this kingdom being compared to a net, cast into the sea, which gathered of every kind, we understand Christ to represent the different classes of individuals who would make a profession of his heavenly truths, would accept his religion, and thus be gathered into his heavenly kingdom. These different classes are referred to in the parable of the Sower. Some joyfully accepted the truth, but through various influences, they fell away from it, and abandoned it. Riches choked the word with some, and others could not endure persecution; while others still remained true and faithful under every trial, even unto the end, and were saved from the terrible calamities which came upon those who abandoned the truth.

A separation is represented as taking place at the end of the world, or the *end* of the *aion*, *age*, and *not* at the end of the *kosmos*, the material universe. Many mistake the meaning of the Savior, by erroneously supposing that he referred to the material world, or universe. In the original language, there are two words which are translated *world*, which we find in the immediate connection, viz.: *kosmos* and *aion*.

"The field is the world," verse 38, (*kosmos*.) But when it says: "The harvest is the end of the world," verse 39; and "So shall it be in the end this world," verse 40–49, we find that Jesus used a different word, viz.: *aion*, which clearly shows that he did *not* refer to the *end* of the material

universe, for had he done so, he would have employed the word *kosmos*. *Aion* means *age* or *time;* an indefinite period of time. Donnegan, a lexicographer, defines *aion* thus: "Time; a space of time; life-time and life," etc. The end of the *aion*, or the end of that *age*, referred to the time when severe national judgments would come upon the Jewish people for their sins, and all those who abandoned the truth, or the kingdom, on account of persecution or through whatever other influences, would experience the just desert of their sins by suffering in the judgments which came upon that ungodly nation. Then a separation took place between the wicked and the just, so that not a single disciple perished, not a righteous man was overwhelmed in the destruction which came upon the Jews, as Eusebius, the historian, informs us.

Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, says the same thing, thus:

"It is very remarkable that not a single Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem, though there were many there when Cestius Gallus invested the city; and had he persevered in the siege, he would have rendered himself master of it; but when he, unexpectedly and unaccountably, raised the siege, the Christians took that opportunity to escape."

EATETH DAMNATION TO HIMSELF.

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself."—1 CORINTHIANS xi. 29.

The word rendered *damnation* in this passage, is *krima*, and is translated *judgment* and *condemnation*. It occurs in Matthew vii. 2, and is rendered *judgment;* "For with what judgment ye judge," etc. It occurs in Luke xxiii. 40, and is rendered there *condemnation:* "Thou art in the same condemnation." In Luke xxiv. 20, it is applied to Christ, and is rendered *condemned:* "Deliver him to be condemned to death." Jesus, when on earth, made use of the same word, and applied it to himself, in John ix. 39: "For judgment I am come into this world." *Krima*, which is rendered *damnation* in the passage before us, is here translated *judgment.* The doctrine of endless punishment finds no support in this passage. The word *damnation* is too harsh a rendering of *krima;* it means temporal punishment, which was designed for the good of the offender. The succeeding verse shows what this *krima* was, or in what the punishment consisted, viz.—*weakness* and *sickness:* "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and

many sleep." This was the punishment they brought upon themselves in eating and drinking unworthily. Those referred to, indulged in irregularities and excesses, so that they did not discern the Lord's body.

The most intelligent orthodox commentators take this view of the subject, as the following quotations will show:

WHITBY.—"*Damnation:* the word imports temporal judgments; and when St. Peter saith, the time is come, *arxasthai* to *krima*, that judgment must begin at the house of God, (1 Peter iv. 17,) not damnation, surely. And this is certainly the import of the word here, (1,) because the Corinthians did thus eat unworthily, and yet the judgments inflicted on them for so doing were only temporal, viz.: weakness, sickness and death; (verse 30.) (2,) Because the reason assigned for those judgments is, that they might not be condemned in the other world, or that they might not be obnoxious to damnation."

CLARKE.—"*Krima:* judgment, punishment; and yet this is not unto *damnation;* for the judgment, or punishment, inflicted upon the disorderly and profane, was intended for their emendation; for in verse 32, it is said, when we are judged *krinomenoi*, we are chastened, *paideuometha*, corrected as a father does his children, that we should not be condemned with the world."

AND WE ARE NOT SAVED.

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."—JEREMIAH viii. 20.

This passage has no reference to the salvation of man after death. It is connected with events which have exclusive reference to this world. It has allusion to those temporal calamities which came upon the Jewish people when they were overpowered by the invading hosts of Nebuchadnezzar. He came upon them in an unexpected moment, and cut off all hope of escape, at a season when they could not retreat, and they had made no preparation for flight. While yet they felt secure, they were suddenly overwhelmed, the harvest was past, the enemy was upon them, and they had made no preparation for a siege. Instead of being saved, they were in the hands of their conquerors.

The face of the country in Palestine is much diversified, which gives great variety to the climate; so that when it is excessively warm on the plains, it is extremely cold on the mountains. It is very cold as winter approaches, and it becomes difficult and dangerous to travel the mountainous regions of the country. Hence, when Jesus fore-

told the national calamities which were to come upon Jerusalem, he told the disciples to pray that their flight be not in the winter, clearly indicating the danger of traveling at that time. So in the passage before us. The prophet alludes to the approaching invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, and the utter impossibility of escape. They had been resting in false security, and made no preparation for such an invasion, when, in an unlooked-for moment, the king of Babylon approached with his army. While even some had cried peace, peace, there was no danger of war, even then the enemy was upon them, there was no escape. They were powerless; no provision had been made for defense during the summer, which then was past; the harvest had then gone, the summer ended, the winter was at hand, the roads impassable, and there was no escape — they were not saved. They could neither prevent the invasion, nor escape from the enemy. They might as well be taken captive as to perish in the mountains in attempting to escape. This is evidently the meaning of the passage before us. Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, has the following upon this passage:

"*The harvest is past.* The siege of Jerusalem lasted two years; for Nebuchadnezzar came against it in the ninth year of Zedekiah, and the city was taken in the eleventh. (See 2 Kings xxv. 1–3.) This seems to have been a proverb: We expected deliverance the first year — none came; we hoped for it the second year — we were disappointed; we are not saved — no deliverance is come."

GOD ANGRY EVERY DAY.

"God is angry with the wicked every day."—PSALMS vii. 11.

A misapprehension of the original meaning of these words, in connection with a false religious education, has led many to give to them an interpretation directly the reverse from what was intended by the writer.

Dr. Adam Clarke, the learned Methodist divine and commentator, has taken great pains to give us the different translations of this passage, some of which we here present, to show the different renderings:

The *Vulgate.*—"God is a judge, righteous, strong and patient. Will He be angry every day?"

The *Septuagint.*—"God is a righteous judge, strong and long suffering; not bringing forth his anger every day."

The *Arabic* is the same as the *Septuagint.*

The *Genevan* version, printed by Barker, the king's printer, 1615, translates thus: "God judgeth the righteous, and him that contemneth God every day." On which there is this marginal note: "He doth continually call the wicked to repentance by some signs of his judgments."

Dr. Clarke then presents his own views in the following language:

"I have judged it of consequence to trace this verse through all the ancient versions, in order to be able to ascertain what is the *true reading* where the evidence on one side amounts to a positive affirmation, 'God is angry every day,' and on the other side, to as positive a negation, 'He is *not* angry every day.' The mass of evidence supports the latter reading. The Chaldee first corrupted the text by making the addition, *with the wicked*, which our translators have followed, though they have put the words into *italics*, as not being in the Hebrew text. Several of the versions have read it in this way: 'God judgeth the righteous, and is *not* angry every day.'"

The meaning of the passage is, that God judgeth the righteous justly and continually, though He is not angry with them. Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne; still his punishments are disciplinary, and his administration benevolent. His government is equitable, but He is not angry day by day with his children. According to the *Septuagint* version, "God is a righteous judge, not bringing forth his anger every day." If He were an angry, passionate being, then He would not judge in righteousness. The meaning is, that, day by day, He is a righteous judge, and, therefore, *not* an angry God. The text originally taught an entirely different sentiment from what the translators make it teach. It taught that God was *not* angry every day, as were heathen deities, but was a just, good and righteous God.

HIDDEN TO THE LOST.

"But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."—2 CORINTHIANS iv. 3.

A brief allusion to the context will exhibit the apostle's meaning. In the preceding chapter, he had been speaking of the two dispensations, contrasting the old and new covenants, and exhibiting the superiority of the Gospel over the Law. There was, indeed, some glory in the Law, but so great was the glory of the Gospel, that the Law appeared to have no glory, by reason of the glory that excelleth! Moses was obliged to veil his face, because of the splendor of his countenance, which the Israelites could not look upon steadfastly. So there was a veil upon the hearts of the people; or, in other words, their minds were blinded, darkness rested upon their souls, which could only be removed by the light of the glorious gospel; hence it was said, that this veil was done away in Christ.

Now that the gospel was preached, nothing was concealed. Nothing was now hidden; all types and shadows were done away, and the gospel was proclaimed in all its fullness. And if its divine truths were not now perceived, it was because the

people were willfully blind. If the gospel be hid, or *veiled*, so that the people did not discover its divine excellency, they were lost; not endlessly lost, but *lost in sin;* their hearts were *veiled* by the errors to which they clung; their minds blinded by darkness and unbelief, and they were in a state of sin and degradation. Their state of sin was their lost state. Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, says, that "the word does not necessarily imply those that will *perish eternally*, but it is a common epithet to point out a man without God in the world."

"If our gospel be hid," or if its divine excellencies are not perceived, its heavenly truths seen and appreciated, it is because people willfully close up the avenues to their souls, and shut out its light from their hearts, and obstinately remain blind and lost. They were in darkness and unbelief. The gospel was plainly preached; and if it were obscure to any, it was because they closed their hearts against the light of truth, and preferring darkness to light, remained in a lost condition. And this was the moral state of the Jews. They were lost in sin, chose darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. Their minds were blinded, and they would not come unto Christ, that they might have life. The passage under consideration has no reference to the future world, but to the lost condition into which sin and error bring man in this life.

AGREE WITH THINE ADVERSARY.

"Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily, I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."—MATTHEW v. 25, 26.

The meaning of this passage has been so entirely misapprehended, that some have erroneously supposed that Almighty God, who has created us for his pleasure, is our adversary. He is represented as our enemy, and unless we do something quickly to appease his wrath, and secure his favor, He will cut us off and throw us into the prison of hell, where we must remain eternally.

The language, however, clearly implies deliverance from prison, under certain circumstances, which shows conclusively that the punishment cannot be endless in duration. "Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou has paid the uttermost farthing;" teaching clearly a release when the uttermost farthing was paid.

This proves nothing, therefore, in regard to endless punishment. Besides, God is not the adversary of man, but the Father of the world's great family, and a God of infinite love. He was prompted by

the benevolence of his own nature to awaken man into existence, and has crowned that existence with tender mercies and loving kindness. "For his pleasure all things are and were created." He has opened his bountiful hand and scattered blessings along the pathway of humanity. In all our wanderings, He has never forgotten us, but has pitied us in our frailties, and loved us while dead in trespasses and sins. He is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. And He is that God who will have compassion according to the multitude of his tender mercies. In a word, He is our Father, possessing all the moral qualities and perfections that belong to a good Father.

The adversary alluded to in the passage under consideration, was a legal adversary, or an opponent at law. Reference was made to human tribunals and jurisprudence, and the penalty which follows negligence in the settlement of difficulties. It is better to come at once to some agreement with an adversary, and settle all disputes and difficulties immediately, rather than by delay and procrastination, provoke the adversary to deliver thee to the officers of the law, and be cast into prison. We are admonished to avoid all such litigations. The subject has no reference to the future world, but to things pertaining to this life.

HOPE OF THE HYPOCRITE.

"And the hypocrite's hope shall perish."—JOB viii. 13.

Although these words are often brought forward to prove the doctrine of endless punishment, yet they do not teach so much as a future state of existence. Not the slightest allusion is made to the immortal world in this passage. All this has reference to this world. It does not say that the hypocrite shall perish, nor be cut off in the future state of existence, only that his hope shall perish. He shall not realize his expectations; he shall be thwarted in his purposes, and defeated in his plans. The meaning is, "The expectation of the wicked shall perish." Prov. x. 28.

This is the first place where the word "hypocrite" occurs in the Bible, and does not fully express the meaning of the original, as Dr. Adam Clarke says. "Hypocrite," he says, "is a very improper translation of the Hebrew." It means, that the hope or expectation of the wicked shall perish, or shall not be realized. Such hope to remain concealed in their wickedness, and to carry out successfully their machinations, and execute their evil plans; but they shall be caught in their

own evil ways, and snared in the work of their own hands. (Psalms ix. 16.) "Your sin shall find you out." Numb. xx. 26. Being thus defeated, the hope of the hypocrite, or wicked man, perishes. He is not successful in his wickedness. The wicked man hopes to sin with impunity; but this hope shall perish, his expectation shall be cut off. He shall be punished for his iniquity. He cannot escape merited retribution. God will by no means clear the guilty. Every wicked man hopes to succeed in his evil plans, to avoid detection and escape punishment; but as God has otherwise ordered, it may properly be said in this respect, that his hope, or expectation, shall perish. Calamity shall come upon him suddenly. In an unexpected moment, he shall be overwhelmed with confusion and sorrow. While apparently in a prosperous condition, he will meet with sudden destruction. As the flag in its greenness soon withereth, so are the paths of all that forget God. Their triumph is short, their prosperity is of brief duration; hence, it was said that their hope shall perish.

"Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure." Verse 14, 15. This language was designed to exhibit the sudden and unexpected judgment of God upon the sinful in this life. No reference was made to the immortal world.

FURNACE OF FIRE.

"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."—MATTHEW xiii. 42.

It was a custom of the sacred writers to represent any place of affliction and suffering as a furnace. We must bear this in mind, if we would understand the Scriptures correctly. Egypt was spoken of as a furnace, because the Jews suffered great tribulation and persecution there. "For the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the *iron furnace*, even out of Egypt." Deut. iv. 20. See also 1 Kings viii. 51; Isa. xlviii. 10; Jer. xi. 4.

The most severe calamity came upon the Jews in Jerusalem, and they are spoken of as suffering great tribulation, such as had not been since the beginning of the world, nor ever should be again; hence, that city is spoken of as a *furnace of fire*. "But if ye will not hearken unto me, to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then will I kindle *a fire in the gates thereof*, ... and it shall not be quenched." Jer. xvii. 27. This places the subject beyond a doubt, that *fire* was employed as a metaphor, to set forth the divine judgments which came upon the Jewish nation.

Jerusalem is called a furnace of fire. "The Lord's *fire* is in Zion, and his *furnace in Jerusalem.*" Isa. xxxi. 9. There is another passage very explicit and direct on this point.

"And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you *into the midst of Jerusalem*, as they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it, so will I gather you in mine anger, and in my fury, and I will leave you there and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the *fire* of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I, the Lord, have poured out my fury upon you." Ezek. xxii. 17–22.

This passage shows most conclusively that the *furnace of fire* was not in eternity, but in Jerusalem, where the divine judgments were poured out upon the house of Israel for their sins. *There* the sinful people were gathered and melted as in a furnace of fire. *There* was weeping and gnashing of teeth. *There* they lifted up their eyes, being in torment, being burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat. All this represented an adequate retribution for sin, the judgments of God in the earth.

GOING BEFORE TO JUDGMENT.

"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment: and some men they follow after."—1 TIMOTHY v. 24.

The context indicates clearly the meaning of this passage. Paul was giving Timothy a word of caution in regard to the affairs of the church, and the necessity of guarding most carefully against imposition, and placing unworthy individuals in responsible positions in the church. In establishing churches and appointing elders to their office, he cautions Timothy against acting hastily, lest he should bring unworthy men into those responsible positions, who would be a reproach to the cause of Christ, and dishonor the church of God. Hence, the exhortation to lay hands suddenly on no man; that is, do not act hastily in the matter, but form an intimate acquaintance with the men to be appointed to sacred offices in the church. And do nothing by partiality, lest you become a partaker of other men's sins; show no favoritism by introducing unworthy men into the office.

Some would profess Christianity from unworthy motives, to gain, perhaps, some influence and position in the church, who had not really and truly

reformed. Paul would therefore have Timothy enter upon a careful and rigid investigation of the character of the individuals to be appointed to these sacred offices in the church. There were genuine converts whom he had long known, true and faithful disciples of Christ, and some whose lives were only partially reformed, and whose sins were open and apparent to all. They go *before to judgment*, or their sins are apparent before you enter upon any investigation of them. And some men they follow after; that is, they might be hypocritical, and so succeed in concealing their sins that they might not become known till after the investigation, and they had been inducted into the sacred office. This is evidently the meaning of the apostle.

Macknight comments as follows on this passage:

"In judging of those who desire sacred offices, consider, that of some men, the sins are very manifest, leading before inquiry, to condemnation. Such reject. But in others, especially, their sins are so concealed that the knowledge of them follows after inquiry. For which reason no one ought to be appointed to sacred offices hastily."

SIN UNTO DEATH.

"If a man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."—1 JOHN v. 16, 17.

This passage has been sadly misinterpreted, not only by many honest and sincere Christians, but its meaning has not always been apparent to some learned theologians. Some have supposed that it referred to what is called the "unpardonable sin," for the forgiveness of which we should not pray. But some of the most eminent commentators admit that the apostle here made no reference to the sin against the Holy Ghost. "I do not think," says Dr. Adam Clarke, "the passage has anything to do with what is termed *the sin against the Holy Ghost*, which I have proved that no man can now commit." The evident design of the apostle was to cultivate a heavenly disposition and temper in his brethren, and a tender spirit toward the erring. Under the Jewish law some sins were punishable with death, and those who committed offences, the penalty of which was death, were said to commit a sin unto death, or a sin worthy of death. They

were not to pray for the deliverance of such an offender from the penalty of violated law. There were many offences which the law did not punish with death; and the sin not being unto death, the apostles were to labor for the restoration of such offenders, and seek to restore them to the paths of virtue and peace, that they might become again useful members of society.

Bishop Horne, we think, gives the true meaning of this passage. He says:

"The Talmudical writers have distinguished the *capital punishments* of the Jews into lesser deaths, and such as were more grievous; but there is no warrant in the Scriptures for these distinctions, neither are these writers agreed among themselves what particular punishments are to be referred to these two heads. A capital crime generally was termed *a sin of death*, (Deut. xvii. 6); or *a sin worthy of death*, (Deut. xxi. 22); which mode of expression is adopted, or rather imitated, by the apostle John, who distinguishes between a sin unto death, and a sin *not* unto death. (1 John v. 16.) Criminals, or those who were deemed worthy of capital punishment, were called *sons* or *men of death*, (1 Samuel xx. 32; xxxi. 16; 2 Samuel xix. 28, marginal reading,) just as he who had incurred the punishment of scourging was designated a *son of stripes*, (Deut. xxv. 16; 1 Kings xiv. 6.) A similar phraseology was adopted by Jesus Christ, when he said to the Jews: "Ye shall die in your sins. (John viii. 21–24.) Eleven different sorts of capital punishments are mentioned in the sacred writings."

DRAW BACK TO PERDITION.

"But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—HEBREWS x. 39.

Many have erroneously supposed that this language refers to the immortal world, and the drawing back to perdition, means the misery of the soul in hell! It is supposed that the saving of the soul, refers to the deliverance of man from endless punishment. This view of the subject is supported by human creeds, but not by divine revelation. The passage has no reference to the immortal world.

Those who abandoned the truth, became unfaithful, and turned back to the beggarly elements of Judaism, and suffered in the judgments which came upon the disobedient and sinful, were said to *draw back to perdition*, or to *destruction*, as the original is sometimes rendered. But Paul would have his brethren found faithful, and persevere unto the end, even to the saving of their lives.

We here present the opinions of several orthodox commentators upon this passage, as quoted by Paige:

LIGHTFOOT.—"As Christ's pouring down his vengeance, in the destruction of that city and peo-

ple, is called his 'coming in his glory,' and his 'coming in judgment;' and as the destruction of that city and nation characterized, in Scripture, as the destruction of the whole world, so there are several passages that speak of the nearness of that destruction, that are suited according to such characters. Such is that in 1 Corinthians x. 11, 'Upon whom the ends of the world are come;' 1 Peter iv. 7, 'The end of all things is at hand;' Hebrews x. 37, 'Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.'"—*Sermon on James* v. 9.

WAKEFIELD.—"But we are not they who withdraw unto destruction, but who faithfully persevere, to the deliverance of our lives."

CLARKE.—"We are not cowards who slink away, and, notwithstanding, meet *destruction;* but we are faithful, and have our souls saved alive. The words *peripoiesis psuche* signify the *preservation of life.* See the note Ephesians i. 14. He intimates, that, notwithstanding the persecution was hot, yet they should escape with their *lives.*"

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